Lucretia Crocker.

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LUCRETIA CROCKER

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MRS. EDNAH DOW CHENEY

AT THE REQUEST OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION

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LUCRETIA CROCKER

TEACHER

how she became what she was; but the records are scanty, and we must respect the shyness of affection, so that our record must be judged more by its good will than its accomplishment.

Lucretia Crocker was born in Barnstable, Mass., Dec. 31, 1829. I have little information regarding her childhood or girlish life. Her ancestors came early to this country, and settled in the old Commonwealth. All her influences and associations belonged to the New England type of life.

We must imagine the little girl in her simple country home, trudging not "unwillingly to school," delighting in the solemn grandeur of the ocean, and loving and beloved in all her family relations. Who were the enviable teachers who helped to mould this mind so receptive and so active, I know not, until the time when she entered the Normal School. Her family had then removed to Shawmut Avenue in Boston, and she attended as a day scholar. If the adequate training given to this rare mind had been the only result of the Normal School System, it would have justified the enthusiastic expectations of its founders. But, if unequalled, she was not alone, but the centre of a group of noble and dear friends.

The Normal School for Girls was established at Lexington in 1839, and Rev. Cyrus Peirce affectionately

called "Father Peirce") was selected as the first principal. It began its work under many difficulties, with only three pupils.

Miss Crocker must have entered the school in 1847 or 1848, as she graduated in 1850; and she thus came under the instruction of both Mr. Peirce and his successor, Mr. Stearns. In the spring of 1851 Mr. Stearns was obliged to spend some time at the South for the benefit of his health, leaving the school under the care of his able assistants, Misses Pennell, Crocker, and Whittemore.

Miss Crocker retained her position as instructor in this school until the year 1854. I shall select from the many tributes paid to her success in this work.

A fellow-pupil writes: "We were classmates in the Normal School (then removed to West Newton) in the years of 1849 and 1850. I remember her as a slight, rather delicate-looking girl, whose quiet dignity was impressive, but not appalling. With her fine, well-balanced mind, she naturally took and held a high place in her class. In after years it was my privilege occasionally to meet her, and the memory of being classmates and Normalites was a tie of mutual interest and friendship. I wish I might write some words that would be a worthy tribute to the life of a noble woman."

Another writes: "I recall only the general fact of her working very hard in her mathematics, the Calculus espe-

cially. And I always thought her wonderful success in teaching it, was, that not only the subject, but the difficulties she encountered in understanding it, were so fresh in her mind. . . . I know that in physical geography she read a great deal, and made out papers on the subject that were exceedingly interesting, that were used at each lesson, and copied by each member of the class." She used no text-book. "Everybody knew what a worker she was, and what a teacher, and what a tender, sweet, simple woman."

Among the most feeling and eloquent tributes to Miss Crocker's memory was an address by her dear friend who succeeded her in the office of supervisor, Mrs. Hopkins. It was read at the New England Women's Club, and I am permitted to make some extracts from it: —

"I first met Miss Crocker at the Normal School in West Newton, where she was one of a trio of gifted and lovely women whom I was so fortunate as to call my teachers. Nothing could be more exquisitely feminine than the personal traits and demeanor which distinguished her. A tall and slender form, girlish in outline, with classic poise and contour of head and face; she gave at once such an impression of gentleness and firmness, of strength and delicacy, of reserve and expression, of modesty and mastery as are rarely combined in mature life. Still more rare are such balance and repose resulting from such diverse activity seen in a maiden of hardly twenty summers.

These characteristics remained hers through life. Without assumption, she was an incarnation of inborn leadership. With an ambition and determination for exact and thorough scholarship, with a conscientious devotion to whatever she accepted as duty, with a mind of wonderful order and symmetry and crystalline clearness of perception, unequivocal in its decisions, with a native power of organizing and classifying, an instinct for imparting and directing, she made a perfect presiding officer and an invariably successful builder and head of complex organizations. Yet, in all this manifestation of qualities usually regarded as masculine, her extreme development of the distinctively feminine was quite as marked, and preserved her womanliness intact and supreme. . . . Indeed, it was the quiet womanly force operating in every direction of mental and moral activity, radical, permeating, and diffusive, which made her not only an oracle, but an inspiration to all who knew her. . . . There she stands in my memory, the 'Maiden Teacher,' with her fine reserve of posture, her simple and native dignity of manner, her fair and pure lines of form and face, the essence of delicacy and refinement and of quiet strength. . . . In recalling her history and trying to portray her image, I find myself ever retreating from the forms and activities of her life to its essence, so much more beautiful was she than all her work; yet I must go back to some

of her marvellous work as a teacher. Geography, natural science, and mathematics were her specialties in the Normal School while I was there. In geography she simply inspired us all. Her soft, clear voice, distinct and delicate utterance, made the finest truths articulate. The globe was her only text-book; and, as she stood beside it, her dainty fingers straying over its surface or pointing unerringly to the spot of which she spoke, she seemed to hold the round earth as a toy in her slender hands, revealing all its mechanism, all its beauty, all its relations to the delighted group before her. She threw streams of light over its mountains, plains, and oceans, till it glowed in our minds with undying suggestiveness and ever-widening vistas of future study. I have again and again said to myself, as one or another of her pupils has since those days dealt with the subject, with the conspicuous approval of the public, 'That is Miss Crocker's teaching blooming out through other minds.' I do not think I shall be gainsaid when I refer to Miss Hall's well-known Geographies, which Miss Crocker herself conducted through the press, or Miss Andrews's lovely introductions to this study, which are now read by all our children.

"In zoölogy I shall never forget her clear-cut analysis, her inclusive grouping, her adherence to the supremacy of type; and, when in that department Agassiz came before us to open wide the gates and shed the lustre of his genius

and his love upon the realms of living form, we know he found our teacher a true priestess in the temple of Nature, and revered and admired her. But, above all other wonders of her skill, was the wonder of her teaching in the higher mathematics. Is it possible she was but a girl? See the school-room walls lined with classes at work on the blackboard, while she stood without sign of book or any prompting except of her own sure brain, and ran the sweet gamut of her clear tones through problem after problem in plane or spherical trigonometry, assigning with lightning rapidity, and as easily as the bird sings his call, the difficult task to one after another of the responsive and expectant line. Then how quick was she to note the error, and, without waste of time or words to call attention to it, just so as would clear it up directly to the mind of the worker. Her skill, facility, and crystalline clearness in mathematics were extraordinary. Her hold upon the class was thoroughly magnetic, and the brains before her were moved by her as the electric wires by the battery. . . . It was after such a masterpiece of her work at a public examination that one of the first educators expressed his admiration, saying that 'she could fill the Chair of Mathematics in any university with distinguished ability.' "

This occasion was long remembered by those who were present.

"So it came to pass that, after leaving the impress of her unusual gifts and attainments upon the pupils of the Normal School, she was called to occupy the Chair of Mathematics in Antioch College."

At the end of her four years' teaching at the Normal School, Miss Crocker remained for some time with her family at home, where she was the light and joy of her parents and sister until she went to Antioch College, at the earnest request of Horace Mann.*

While she was quiet in her manners, and perhaps even conservative in her tastes, she was very broad and liberal in her views; and this underlying freedom took from her everything of restraint or stiffness. She met every one so simply that they felt no fear of her. The child of thirteen felt rather comradeship and affection than awe; and yet dignity was a word truly belonging to her, and one could hardly conceive of even a school-girl being impertinent to her.

Miss Crocker was progressive in her educational views, and she had very much at heart the promotion of scientific study in the schools. She valued it not alone as an acquisition of useful knowledge, but as a valuable means of mental culture.

Her own taste was rather scientific than literary. She was an associate member of the Association for the Advancement of Science in 1876, and became a corporate

* See page 20.

member in 1885. As science had been considered as rather out of the range of women's intellect, her influence in this direction was of great value to the general cause of women's advancement, as well as to the schools.

The tribute paid to her work by Professor Hyatt shows how she was regarded by true scientists: —

ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

General Meeting, Oct. 20, 1886.

The Chair announced the death of Miss Lucretia Crocker, elected an Associate Member in 1876 and a Corporate Member in 1885.

Professor Hyatt said: —

"*Mr. President*, — The lady to whose death you have called the attention of the Society had become, through association in educational work, my intimate professional friend. During the past ten years she has been one of the persons to whom I have looked for advice and aid in our educational work, so far as it related to the public schools and to our Museum in some of its connections. During all this time she has never refused her assistance, and has repeatedly volunteered in doing onerous tasks for our benefit. I therefore offer these brief remarks, not only

in my official capacity, but also with a deep sense of the personal loss of a true friend and tireless associate.

"Miss Lucretia Crocker, in the course of a few brief years of public life, won her way to the respectful consideration of every man with whom she came in contact, on account of the purely impersonal and professional soundness of her mind and judgment. Among women, these qualities, her sympathy with all good works, her personal sacrifices in the cause of education, and her unswerving devotion to this work made her a leader of commanding ability. Her course in connection with this Society has shown the same consistent devotion to a cause as elsewhere. She has perpetually sought to fill her proper sphere, quietly and without publicity, indifferent to the fate of her own name, provided certain aims were accomplished and a definable progress in education attained.

"Miss Crocker never gave a scientific communication, was rarely present at the meetings of this Society, and therefore remained comparatively unknown to a certain portion of our members. Nevertheless, she belonged beyond question to that small class of persons whose memory we shall always especially honor.

"During her ten years of membership, and for several years previous to her election, she was a frequent visitor in this building; and the Society's power of doing useful

work was sensibly enlarged by her efforts during this time. Immediately after election to the Board of Education of this city, she took up the natural sciences, believing that through them much might be done for the reformation of the existing systems of education. She became first a pupil and then an earnest friend and indefatigable co-worker in the Teachers' School of Science. The continuance of this school, in 1878–79 was due to her unsolicited intercession with Mrs. Hemenway and Mrs. Shaw, from whom she obtained the funds to pay for the lessons given during that winter. The school might have temporarily ceased to exist but for the united and voluntary exertions of Miss Crocker and Mrs. Hooper. They solicited subscriptions from the ladies of Boston, and worked with such success that one of our most efficient years was perhaps the winter of 1880–81.

"Miss Crocker's connection with this department was not confined, however, to the simple office of obtaining means to keep it alive. As supervisor in the public schools of Boston, she became well acquainted with the needs of teachers, and used her influence to urge them on to the attainment of a higher culture in natural history. She also used her knowledge to make frequent suggestions with regard to the selections of subjects for the courses, and these were almost invariably such as we could approve and follow with advantage. During the last fourteen

years she was present every Saturday afternoon, almost without fail, and, when needful, spent the greater part of the day in our lecture-rooms. It therefore goes without saying that she looked upon this as a very important part of her work in the public schools; and, unfortunately, it is also easy to perceive that her death may sensibly affect the immediate prosperity and future usefulness of this department.*

"These facts, however, do not by any means represent the value of Miss Crocker's life to the Society, nor the loss it has suffered in her death. She was also deeply interested in the progress of the Museum, and had fully entered into its plan of work. Her power and influence were very large. She had gained the confidence of many persons, and was well known to the public; and she had promised to place herself at the service of this deparment whenever the proper time should arrive.

"I do not feel qualified to speak with regard to the work of Miss Crocker in the public schools; but one thing seemed very evident, even to me, that it was certainly due to her more than to any other person that natural history has been granted a place in the curriculum."

With regard to another chapter of her work in the

*These fears have been fully realized. Since Miss Crocker's death there has been no advance in the teaching of natural history in the public schools. Her decease marked the cessation of the movement in this direction, and since then all progress has been confined to individuals and to single schools.—*Hyatt.*

public schools, Mrs. Richards has, at my request, written a short communication: —

"Miss Crocker, while not a specialist, had the rare quality of mind which permitted a wide acquaintance with various branches of elementary science and a judicial balancing of the claims of each. It was this faculty which made her so well qualified to suggest to specialists appropriate ways of teaching science from the educational standpoint, and not from the technical or professional one.

"Her judgment as to the essential points in any science which could be made of value to children and youth as a part of their education was almost unerring. Her influence in this direction can never be fully known, but we may select a few instances. She was the first organizer, in 1872 or 1873, of the science department of the 'Society to encourage Studies at Home.' She was a member of the Woman's Educational Association, and, although rarely present at its meetings, was really foremost in all movements pertaining to scientific education for women. We never did anything in opposition to Miss Crocker's judgment, and her approval was sufficient to insure the success of whatever we undertook.

"Of her own especial work among the teachers and in the schools, one instance will suffice to show her scientific method. Miss Crocker, in the year 1881–82, asked me to join with her in giving a series of 'First Lessons on

Minerals' for the use of the public schools. For two years we met at the appointed hour, and together gave the lessons, some one hundred and twenty-five in all, in twelve schools. Miss Crocker was not only critical and suggestive in our discussion of the lesson, but, while she wrote on the board the children's answers to my questions, she supplemented and modified my work in a marked degree, thus bringing into the course all the experience which she had gained. It was this practical quality in the instruction which made the lessons so successful as models of elementary scientific teaching. Nevertheless, she refused all credit for the work done. From many quarters she gathered ideas on special topics, selecting and combining whatever could be made of use into a harmonious whole for the use of the public schools.

"I think I may truthfully say that no educational work of public importance has been undertaken in Boston since 1871, without Miss Crocker's interest and counsel.

"We have lost not only a friend, but an inspiration."

Perhaps her earliest appreciation of the value of science was due to the influence of Agassiz. He saw her unusual capacity, and it was by his wish that she took charge of the Department of Science in the "Studies at Home."

She could hardly be called a scientist, for she had never been able to devote herself to any specialty sufficiently to carry it to the point of original research; but her

admirable method told to the greatest advantage. A letter from one who knew her mainly in this connection will abundantly illustrate this point: —

"She was the one first in charge of the 'Science Section' of Miss Ticknor's 'Study at Home' Before I knew her I used to see Miss Crocker at the Women's Education meetings, and had the greatest admiration for her persuasive, gentle words and her clear, sensible head. How skilfully could she reconcile opposing parties, and pour oil on very troubled waves!

"In the Science Club, of which she was an honorary member from the first, I learned one very marked trait in her character. She inspired and aroused others to their best work, understanding the points of each and every case, and how to overcome any obstacle that puzzled or perplexed.

"To illustrate one little case of many: —

"Miss Arms and Miss Stone collected clay stones, in which they were much interested. The variety in form puzzled them; for they were discs, circles, ovals, double discs, and irregular in various fashion. Miss Crocker said, 'Now, in collecting, keep the clay stones of each bank by themselves.' Doing this, they found that each bed or bank produced stones of a form peculiar to itself, all round or all oval, and so on. Then, by a chemical

analysis of the clay stone (suggested by her), and of the surrounding clay of the bed compared, they found the large percentage of lime in the stone, some forty per cent. compared with the two or three per cent. in the imbedding clay, and wrote a most interesting and valuable paper, full of original observation on a subject very little known, or, I should say, understood. Now, Miss Crocker, not so versed in either geology or chemistry as these two others, could help them, when they were at a standstill, and so direct their work that it was a success.

"I do not know how far she ever carried any science; but she possessed the true scientific mind, the acumen and foresight that would have enabled her to take high rank, had she devoted herself to it in any branch.

"So much the greater her wonderful unselfishness in aiding others, and her generosity, even paying from her own purse, when she felt a case urgent and deserving, and did not like to ask more from the generous friends who gave to the school at Annisquam.

"So the scholarships founded at the Laboratory at Woods Holl were but a continuation of what she had done at Annisquam. Friends gave to her for the aid of students there; but she herself gave constantly (as came to my knowledge), and said nothing of it. But better than money was her wise counsel to all who sought it.

"Very sincerely yours,

"S. Minns.

"Louisburg Square."

In connection with Mrs. Richards, she gave a course of lessons on "Mineralogy" in the public schools; and, while her scientific attainments were decidedly inferior to those of her coworker, Mrs. Richards says that she would often turn to the blackboard, and by a few words and strokes clear up a difficulty in the minds of the pupils much better than she could in many words.

She had a hard struggle to introduce this improvement where it was not at first welcomed, but her admirable tact prevailed over obstacles. She was very steadfast, but not aggressive in her nature. "She worked on the lines of least resistance." If she found the teacher of a school much opposed to her plans, she did not press them with authority, but bided her time until he was ready to work with her.

Her rare power in teaching came from her own intellectual clearness, so that she had full possession of her subject, and had no gaps to cover up, and also from her remarkable powers of intuition, by which she saw the difficulties in her pupils' minds, and was able to meet them directly. Her absence of egotism prevented her from ever thinking of anything but the benefit of her pupils. She was an honorary member of a small club of younger women formed for their improvement in scientific studies.

My own personal acquaintance with Miss Crocker began when she was chosen on the Committee on Teachers of the Freedman's Society in 1866. She brought a most important element of strength and life into the work. I do not know that I can better represent it than by reproducing a paper written soon after her death for a memorial service held in her honor by the School Suffrage Association of Ward 23, on Nov. 18, 1886, of which the Secretary gives the following record: —

MEMORIAL MEETING FOR OUR LATE HONORARY MEMBER, MISS LUCRETIA CROCKER.

Nov. 18, 1886.

Mrs. Cheney opened the meeting with a brief account of the early home life of Miss Crocker, and read a letter from a pupil about her earlier days of teaching. Mrs. Channing read a valuable paper from Mrs. Fisher, a more advanced pupil, and Mrs. Horace Mann's account of her connection with her husband at Antioch College. Rev. Mr. De Normandie described her first appearance there as teacher of mathematics, he being a pupil at Antioch at that time, where commenced an intimacy which continued through her life. His remarks were pervaded with great earnestness and feeling.

Mr. George Mann followed, and expressed an equal share of affection and admiration. He said much of her relations with teachers and pupils and her sympathetic criticisms. Mrs. Cheney presented an interesting account of her connection with herself in the freedman's work. Then Miss Lucia Peabody, in a long and eloquent address, gave some history of the Board of Supervisors, their hard work, and the great improvements they had introduced in the public schools, and the large share Miss Crocker had therein. Mr. Tetlow, master of the Girls' High and Latin Schools, made a very impressive address, dwelling upon her introduction of science in the schools, and her many unobtrusive suggestions to both teachers and pupils. Mr. Peterson (supervisor) sent the memorial paper of the Board of Supervisors a feeling and appreciative tribute to the memory of Miss Crocker.

Mrs. Ellen Richards was the last speaker. She had been for years a colaborer with her in the field of science and observation of nature.

F. E. Dwight,
Secretary.

AT ANTIOCH.

BY REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE.

My acquaintance with Miss Crocker began when she took charge of the chair of mathematics at Antioch College. That institution had been dedicated with great promise; and because it was an institution of the highest order, offering its privileges to both sexes, and had secured for its first president Horace Mann, — then easily the foremost educator in New England, — it attracted at once a most earnest and gifted set of young men and women from all parts of the country. When one recalls that in the opening terms were such students as Miss Jane Andrews, Miss Helen Morton, and Miss Adeline Shepard, he can realize not only the promise of the school, but what a place there was for some institution of a high order for young women.

But the sect which had the founding and care of the college not only had no scholars fitted to carry on such an institution, it did not even know what education meant; and, when it found that Horace Mann was determined to have a college of a high order, it hedged his way with every difficulty besides the financial troubles which beset the institution from the first. The professor of Greek did not know the Greek alphabet when he was appointed, had

hardly finished the Greek Reader when he assumed his professor's chair, and never attained to as great a proficiency in the language as might fairly be expected from the average graduate of a good high school. I was once sent by my class to complain to the president of the utter inefficiency of the Greek teacher. Mr. Mann regarded such a petition as an interference with the management of the college which could hardly be considered. Nevertheless, soon after he came into the recitation-room, when we took a malicious interest in showing off the ignorance of the professor.

The professor of mathematics, a man of fierce appearance and pompous bearing and dignified silence, was not greatly superior to the professor of Greek. If any explanation was asked him of a problem, when hard pressed, he escaped in the common phrase, "A little more time and a little more careful examination will doubtless enable you to see how this is."

It is easy to see how superior to all these surroundings Miss Crocker was, with her remarkable gifts and careful training.

I remember perfectly the morning we were assembled in the room of mathematics, awaiting our new teacher; for we shared the surprise of those days in hearing that a woman was to have the higher mathematics. I recall the hush of admiration which fell upon the room when Miss Crocker

came in, with her quiet, gracious, dignified presence, with her fine countenance of culture and intelligence,—a rare modesty mingled with a perfect composure and self-possession. The first recitation was not over before every one felt sure that here was a teacher altogether better equipped than any we had had. It so happened that in the two upper classes were a few students much older than usually found in college, and remarkable for their mathematical taste and gift, to whom the abstruser problems of that science (for which comparatively a very small number has any real interest) were easy and a delight; and, as one after another of these confessed Miss Crocker's rare attainments and faculty of explanation, the early hospitality deepened into profound respect and admiration. Most exacting in her demands upon herself, she was acknowledged as easily superior by the strongest men-pupils and those whose partiality was altogether for mathematics.

It is interesting to note that the two teachers at Antioch in its earlier days most fully equipped and giving the most entire satisfaction were women.

One day, during Horace Mann's last illness, he said to me, "I wonder if the students at Antioch appreciate their privilege in having such a teacher as Miss Crocker"; and then he went on to speak of her gentle and dignified presence, of her remarkable qualifications, of her intense application, which even then threatened to impair her

strong constitution, of her sympathy and helpfulness for those who were toiling along without the mathematical gift, and how, at whatever expense of time or strength to herself, she would be patient with them, and give them any number of hours of outside assistance and encouragement. We saw in these early years of her teaching the same traits which in later years gave her such success as one of the supervisors of the Boston schools; and it was remarkable even then what a rare faculty she had of attracting the young women students, who went to her in perfect confidence, not only in their educational, but in every trouble. "And this," Robertson says, "women are not likely to do."

Of course, it was not possible for Antioch College, with all the financial straits which fell upon it, to retain after the death of Horace Mann teachers of such gifts, or to hold the promise it had given; and Miss Crocker returned to her home.

Beautiful it was for those who had the privilege to see her taking up one public duty after another, and yet carrying on with such an ideal grace the quiet duties of the home which fell to her as infirmities gathered upon her parents, whose love and pride followed every step. With these duties nothing interfered; and no toil nor sacrifice nor watching was too great. Some of us who knew the strain upon her, both from official duties and home claims, looked with intense anxiety lest the over-weighted life

should give way; and the wonder is that all was borne so long. She could not deny herself to her friends, though long into the morning hours the drudgery of her work must go on; for, incredible as it may seem, there were those who had opposed her election and claimed that a woman could never be suitable for a supervisor, who, to prove their claim, would gladly have broken her down by putting additional and routine work upon her, — the one most fitted by every gift for all the highest and finest posts of the office.

Every year made her position more secure; and I cannot but believe that, as year after year great complaints were made against the Board, and threatenings to discontinue it, its permanency has been largely owing to her tact and ability and good work. The character she imparted to it did much, if not more than all others together, to make the public feel it was a necessity in the educational system of Boston. Her thoroughly womanly work, so energetic and strong, so wise, so sensitively conscientious, steadily won converts to her side, until she disarmed criticism and opposition. It may be said without any exaggeration that no one, man or woman, has held the office of supervisor of schools since who has done finer work. Her gentle dignity, her firmness, her keen insight, her endurance, her executive ability, her ready sympathy, her literary taste, her intellectual power, soon made her the real head of the Board.

Her religious nature was her crowning gift. Profoundly radical, in the best sense of the word; using her strong reason upon all the serious questions which twenty-five years ago were thrown upon the theological world,— she could ill bear anything which seemed to attack the sentiment of reverence and worship. One time a young minister read to her, one Saturday evening, a sermon he intended to preach the next morning in her church, upon "Religion a Science,"— a phrase then hardly ever used, although one which has since been made familiar; but she did not quite approve of it, for she thought it would be misunderstood, and that it would fall harshly upon the ears of the worshippers.

James Freeman Clarke once said that, if he were to name two of the most remarkable women of New England, he should say Margaret Fuller and Lucretia Crocker. There are those who were privileged to be her dear friends who would not hesitate to say that, counting all gifts and performances, and knowing the deepest life, Miss Crocker should be named first. She was one of those strong, noble, pure, beautiful natures sent into the world from time to time,— true messengers of the Eternal,— to show us unto what human nature can attain.

WORK AMONG THE FREEDMEN.

A very interesting and important part of Miss Crocker's life was the work which she did for the Southern freedmen during eight or nine years, from 1866 to 1875.

I do not know that she had any active participation in the anti-slavery movement. She was so closely engaged in study and teaching during the exciting years before the war that she took little part in public affairs; yet her intimate association with Horace Mann and other strong opponents of slavery must have led her to think seriously of the subject. One of her most intimate friends was a young woman from Tennessee. She thus had good opportunity to judge fairly of the institution and of the race involved in it.

At any rate, she entered most heartily into the work of educating the freedmen; and her peculiar powers of mind and character and the admirable training she had received gave her at once a special value.

The rare union of tender feeling with calm judgment and clear foresight was apparent in her plans for the schools. In the first enthusiasm of emancipation the teachers had welcomed young and old to the school-house and the child hardly able to totter and the old man and woman too feeble to walk sat side by side, eager for the

new draught of learning for the first time offered to their thirsting lips.

Miss Crocker was not alone in seeing the needed change in modes of teaching; and, indeed, the action of the Teachers' Committee was so perfectly harmonious that it is difficult to separate the work of any one from that of the others. But, in looking back, I do see that her influence was always in the direction of clearer method, of building up a system of education that would afford a permanent foundation for future work, and for placing our power where it would tell to the best advantage. It was delightful to see the old man of seventy at last grasping the alphabet as a solemn spell to unlock his mental powers, though it was too late for him really to acquire education or give it to others; but the strong, active, intelligent boys and girls, knowing enough of slavery to be profoundly grateful for emancipation, not yet paralyzed by its influence, but stimulated by their newly acquired freedom, were the class to whom she looked as the future leaders and teachers of their race, and she constantly advocated the careful grading of the schools, the limited number of scholars, and the selection of those best fitted to form a normal class, to be carefully trained as the future teachers. She always looked forward to a true public school system to be sustained by the people of the South, and as much as possible by the colored people themselves, not to a

charity which should keep them always dependent upon others.

She never betrayed any remnants of race prejudice or any distrust of the Negro's power to rise to the full stature of a man. She felt a peculiar value in this labor among the freedmen, not only for the great opportunities opened to them, but for the new experience it offered in education, since each teacher was thrown mainly upon her own resources, and could develop her own plans with little obstruction from others, unless the Ku-klux burned her school-house or drove her out of town. She always recognized the peculiar value of individual teachers, whether it was the almost military discipline of Mr. Shrewsbury, whose scholars presented books as a soldier does arms, or the freedom in the school of Miss Gardner, who by her inspiring influence brought out the minds of her pupils, and evolved admirable results out of what seemed a little like chaos. She recognized the value of both persons and methods, while she tried to draw the attention of each teacher to the points in which she was deficient. She entered into very close relations with the teachers. Her judgment was excellent in selecting them; and they always felt great support from her sympathy, not only in their personal trials, but in every detail of their work.

At the teachers' festival held each year in the vacation season her voice was perhaps never heard from the plat-

form; but she was seen quietly gliding among the teachers, grasping their hands, looking into their faces with her peculiarly earnest, sympathetic gaze, hearing their stories, giving counsel and encouragement, and gently insinuating anything which might be needed of warning or rebuke. She was never more happy than among teachers.

It is difficult, as I have said, to separate her work from that of others; but one occasion was essentially hers. She valued so highly the experience gained by the teachers in their isolated work that she desired to bring out its results in such a form that they would benefit all others. The committee therefore invited all the teachers to meet for discussion, and she prepared a list of questions to be considered. These were previously sent to all teachers, and those who could not be present were asked to forward written answers. Her questions show the same regard for broad, liberal development of thought and for true moral discipline as does all her later work. I will only mention a few: —

"1. Means to secure good discipline, and create a high moral tone in the school.

"2. Methods of exciting enthusiasm for study and teaching pupils to *think*.

"5. How often should the mental tension and physical weariness of pupils be relieved, and in what way?

"16. What does the study of geography include, besides a brilliant recitation of map questions?"

Geography was always a favorite study, and she believed in making it a very comprehensive one. She entered fully into the labors of her friend Miss Hall in preparing "Our World," which has become so popular; and she prepared a book on the subject herself. I think she accepted and carried out the definition of geography as given at this meeting by the teachers at Florence, S.C.: "Geography includes the study of the different races of men, the nature and design of governments, a general knowledge of the form of the earth and the effects of climate."

"It also inspires sympathy with other nations, and enables us to look out upon the face of Nature with a clearer eye and ponder over the wisdom and power of God."

The twenty-second and last question is full of Miss Crocker's own life and spirit: —

"Has the teacher, as teacher, a right to disregard physical or mental laws? If not, why?"

She reports the general opinion that a teacher cannot fulfil her duty to pupils unless the laws that regulate health of body and mind are carefully observed, and in this she heartily concurred.

While Miss Crocker worked to the full extent of her physical powers, she was not reckless of her health, but

guarded it conscientiously. She respected the body as the instrument of the mind.

With this deep interest in the schools and their teachers, she longed for the opportunity actually to witness their work; and in the spring of 1869 the society decided that they could not employ money to better purpose than in sending her down to inspect the schools. I had the inestimable privilege of accompanying her; and I wish I could give any adequate idea of this wonderful journey, the most important and interesting of my life. Three days on the ocean, which was smoothed for her into the placid calm of a summer lake, was a welcome interval of rest; and from the deep snows of March at home we came at once into the blooming roses of Savannah. She went from city to city and school to school, carrying strength and wisdom and tender sympathy alike to the teachers and the people. I may almost say that she had not an hour of rest except in sleep; for at meal-times and in every interval between the schools the teachers brought their difficulties and troubles to her, and she had to arbitrate quarrels, as well as arrange programmes and decide upon methods. Naturally delicate and fastidious in her personal tastes and habits, she had to encounter many things distasteful to her; but she drank the much-prized sour buttermilk without wincing, and smoothed her knife over her bread when her host commended the splendid

New York butter brought down last fall, and which had not quite come to "spooning."

When Sunday came, we would hope for a little rest, and a ride or walk into the country, but were usually greeted on our arrival at a town with the announcement that a Sunday-school concert or some special meeting was arranged at which we were expected to speak. Putting off the shyness which was so characteristic of her, she would speak to the people her words of sympathy and encouragement and of her own simple religious feeling in a way that went to every heart, and then would bear the inevitable general hand-shaking with the courage of a political candidate. Besides her warm interest in the work and the delight she had in her personal relation to the teachers, she was helped by her great love of nature, which found rich satisfaction in the beautiful flowers of the South,— the Cherokee rose, the jasmine, the magnolia, and in the weird Southern moss hanging from the live-oaks, then in their loveliest spring verdure. A delicate sense of humor also made a diversion from the duties of the day; and we had many a good-natured laugh in our own rooms over our experiences, as when, at the prayer-meeting, the Negroes prayed for "a very particular blessing on de committee who had crossed de seas to come to us, and mig[illegible] dey be safely returned to their speckly 'bode and habi[illegible]ner tion," or when one of the multitude who followed us to [illegible]out

station shouted after the somewhat pompous bureau officer who accompanied us: "Good-by, brother! Keep the bellows blowing!"

The graceful, willowy figure, fair complexion, and exquisite refinement of manner formed a charming contrast with the rich bronzes around her, and the exuberant natural life flowing out in the crowds that often followed her steps; and I wish I had the skill of an Eastman Johnson to paint for you scenes which linger in my memory. On one occasion we had been rudely dismissed from a boarding-house on account of social civilities to our colored teachers. They learned the fact from the bureau officer, and their indignation was unbounded; and, when we went from the school to the station, the whole school population, including fathers and mothers, uncles, aunts, sisters, and cousins, followed us to the station, purposely choosing the way through the principal streets. Uncongenial as such a display was to her feelings, I can see the pleasant smile and the graceful step with which she passed on at the head of the procession, in conversation with the teacher, apparently as much at ease and unconcerned as if passing through a quiet street in Boston.

Far more beautiful she looked on another occasion. Miss Smith, a teacher at Sumter, N.C., had among her pupils old Scipio, a blind minister, who had preached to the people for many years, without being able to read

a word. She had procured some raised printing and an alphabet, and taught him his letters; and then, through the kindness of Dr. Howe, the Bible in raised characters was sent to him. Imagine the delight of the old man when this book, to him the very word of God, was opened! He had known it only by hearing it from others.

Miss Smith asked him to read to Miss Crocker; and the old man began laboriously spelling out the first verses of Luke, stumbling over "O most excellent Theophilus" with little comprehension of its meaning. The fair head was bent over the book with that of the old gray Negro, and she patiently followed his careful spelling of the long words. Then she began to explain to him, telling him how Luke was writing to a friend Theophilus, how he himself had followed and known Jesus, and how he now wished to record all the blessed truths he had learned from him. To the old man it was like the lighting up of the sky at sunrise. His face shone with intelligence, his eyes glistened, and he could not express to her the joy and gratitude he felt at the unsealing of the book. He followed with the crowd who implored blessings upon her as she took her way to the station. He had sent this message to the lady who had sent him the alphabet: "Tell the blessed lady that, if I never meet her on earth, I trust I'll meet her in heaven; and I'll tell the good Lord that here is the lady that helped me learn to read." Many such

witnesses will meet her in that court where service to God's ignorant children is the title to honor.

One more picture is too characteristic to be omitted. At Newbern, N.C., we went to visit a school belonging to the Unitarian Association. We had not had our usual cordial welcome by the teachers, and went through a severe rain-storm to the school, somewhat depressed in spirits. On arriving there, we found the cause of the seeming neglect. The principal of the school had suddenly married and gone away, and our letters addressed to her had been forwarded. The assistant teacher was entirely discouraged by the responsibility thus suddenly thrust upon her, and could neither manage nor teach the crowd of eager pupils left to her sole care.

Miss Crocker eagerly seized the opportunity, at once offering to take the first division under her care for the morning. Her eye kindled like that of a war-horse at the sound of a trumpet. She went to the blackboard, and began to examine the class in arithmetic. They were mostly young men,— strong, athletic, very dark, and intensely eager for knowledge. Her questions were so keen and searching, yet so clear, and she comprehended their difficulties so thoroughly, and gave them the desired explanations so concisely and fully, that they were worked up to the highest pitch of excitement, and seemed as if they could not drink in enough of this wonderful outflow

of inspiration. In their eagerness to work at the blackboard, their noses were whitened with the chalk, which left its mark also on forehead or chin or lip or sleeve, in a way most ludicrous to us who were cool lookers-on, but which neither she nor they, in their eagerness, perceived. I think none of them will ever forget that lesson, which brightened the dingy school-room on that rainy day as if a new sun had shone in upon them.

Miss Crocker worked and hoped for the Freedman's Society as long as it could possibly be kept alive, being one of the Executive Committee who carried it on the last year, and finally wound up its affairs. She always retained her interest in the teachers, many of whom she regarded with strong personal affection; and she aided them as far as lay in her power.

These years of work in a new field of education, so different from the thoroughly organized scholarly exercises of the Normal School and college, I believe to have been of very great service to her in broadening her acquaintance with human life, in bringing all her theories of education to the test of fresh practical experience, in blending the most tender sympathy with her intellectual tastes, and so fitting her fully for her work in the public schools of her own city, which was the crowning glory of her life.

Among the pleasantest features of this journey was a week spent with Miss Elizabeth Botume among the sea

islands of South Carolina. Miss Crocker enjoyed the companionship of this noble woman, and had good opportunity of seeing the home life of the freedmen under her charge. Here she enjoyed in perfection the beautiful gray hanging moss; for her entrance to Old Fort Plantation was by moonlight through an avenue of live-oaks hung with it.

She also visited with great interest the school on St. Helena taught by Misses Towne and Murray, which was the oldest one continued under the same teachers, and which showed the benefit of this continuous instruction.

Miss Botume says: —

"In March, 1869, we received notice that Mrs. Cheney and Miss Crocker were on their way South to visit freedmen's schools, and would come to us at Old Fort, then better known as Smith's Plantation, to visit Whitney School. This was an event in our lives, as Miss Fanny and I were living very much alone in an old abandoned plantation house on Port Royal Island. Our only neighbors were colored people, mostly refugees. We were much pleased, but also not a little anxious, at the prospect of this proposed visit. We had not then learned, as we have since, that only a few things are essential to the comfort and well-being of earnest people. . . . The old people, too, came to pay their 'respects to the ladies.' Such stories, merry and pathetic, as were told during these

visits! . . . Miss Crocker made a lasting impression upon all with whom she came in contact. She was clear and convincing in her instructions, logical in discussion, and gentle and persuasive when differing in opinion. . . . The poor women who came to her with their doubts and cares, and the mysteries of life, so new and strange to them, were encouraged and strengthened. They got a new and broader life from our visitors which they never forgot."

In 1865 a number of ladies were called together by Rev. Charles Lowe, then secretary of the American Unitarian Association, to examine children's books and make a list of those worthy a place in Sunday-school libraries. They took the name of the Ladies' Commission on Sunday-school Books. One lady writes: —

"Miss Lucretia Crocker was one of the earliest members; and her service extended over many years, much of the time as president.

"Many of Miss Crocker's most delightful and admirable qualities were manifested at that unique assemblage, where she was an ideal presiding officer.

"Her gentleness and tact drew out the judgments of the timid; while her dignified refinement prevented the clashing of widely different opinions, sometimes uttered with considerable vehemence.

"All the members yielded to the potent sway of so much

wisdom combined with delicate perception and constant consideration for others.

"Her accurate information in science and history made every decision of hers an authority for those who revered her with an unfaltering loyalty.

"She had done her work among us with such modesty and simplicity that, when she left us, on account of her public duties, she was startled and quite overcome by the natural expression of our deep and affectionate appreciation."

At the earnest request of her friend Mrs. Badger, with whom she had been associated at Antioch College, Miss Crocker consented to teach botany and mathematics in her private school; and after the tragic death of her friend she continued for a time her valuable services to the school as well as her sympathetic care for the bereaved family.

Another work in which she was deeply interested was the Horace Mann School for Deaf-mutes. Miss Sarah Fuller, the devoted teacher of the school, writes: —

"Her interest in the Horace Mann School dated from its inception, and continued undiminished. She was always ready to give to it thought, time, and counsel, and was so closely identified with all our plans that it is difficult to express our appreciation of her. I believe that the influence of her beautiful spirit still remains with us."

The chairman of the board for 1877 speaks of the value of the new system of supervision, and adds: —

"One member of the Board of Supervisors, Miss Lucretia Crocker, having previously served both as secretary and chairman of the committee of this school, brought to her new duties an appreciation of its needs and a comprehension of its methods of instruction, and by her unremitting interest and ready co-operation has rendered efficient aid to its present chairman." The report of the year 1887, after a notice of her death, continues: "As a member of the School Committee, and as the Supervisor immediately charged with the oversight of this school, she rendered it the same faithful and helpful service which she gave to every work intrusted to her."

This statement from the well-known head-master of the Girls' High and Latin Schools comes from one well fitted to appreciate her intellectual power: —

"My first acquaintance with Miss Crocker dates back to 1866, when, as a recent college graduate, I was the classical assistant in the Friends' Academy at New Bedford.

" Miss Crocker was an intimate friend of the mother of one of my pupils, and occasionally made her a brief visit. During one of these visits I chanced to call on the parents of my pupil, and was introduced to Miss Crocker. As we talked, with characteristic tact, and with the spirit of self-forgetfulness which always marked her intercourse

with others, she directed the conversation to subjects in which, from my occupation, she had reason to suppose that I took a special interest. She asked me some questions about Greek art and archæology, and the influence which these had exerted on modern art and life. My knowledge of these subjects was very meagre; but, such as it was, Miss Crocker's suggestive questions and appreciative interest drew it all out, so that on my young pupil, who knew even less than I, the conversation produced a marked impression. His mother told me a few days afterward that, in a spirit of enthusiasm, he had asked her if she didn't consider it a great treat to listen to such a conversation as that.

"Whatever of interest there may have been in the conversation referred to was, of course, due to Miss Crocker's share in it, as any one acquainted with us both at that time would readily have understood. The thoughtful courtesy with which she turned the conversation to subjects of presumed interest to the guest of her friends, her complete forgetfulness of self and absorption in the subject under discussion, the native refinement of her speech and manner,— in short, her gracious personality,— lent a charm to every conversation in which she bore a part.

"A gracious personality is not merely a source of charm: it is a source of power as well. There are many ways in which leaders in education, as in other depart-

ments of work, may influence those whose work they direct. Some exert such influence through stirring speech or forceful writing, others through encouraging appreciation, practical suggestion, or trenchant criticism communicated privately; but few have the power to make their commendation and their censure alike a source of inspiration to their subordinates through the charm of a gracious personality. Miss Crocker had this power.

"Miss Crocker, who had previously been a member of the Boston School Board, became a member of the Board of Supervisors in 1876. As I entered the service of the city in 1878, I was familiar with her work as supervisor almost from the beginning. Her qualifications for the delicate task of criticising and guiding the work of the teachers were of a high order. They consisted not merely in her attainments as a scholar, her experience as a teacher, and her training as a thinker on educational questions. In these directions her qualifications, though ample, were perhaps not greater than those of others; but, independently of these, her delicate tact, her native refinement, and her fine gift of sympathy enabled her to exert a personal influence that, in the same sphere, I have seldom seen equalled and never surpassed. Whenever she came into a class-room in the course of her official duties,— and I have often wondered how, amid the pressure of other duties belonging to her position, she found the time to

visit the schools so often, — she seemed to come, not as an official critic, but as a personal friend. Indeed, very many, and I think most of the teachers whose work she supervised and reported upon, never thought of her as an official inspector, but rather as a sympathetic adviser. I have no doubt that this unremitting attention to the duties of her position, and the mental and physical strain caused by the heartiness of her participation in the burdens and responsibilities of others, shortened her life. I have heard intimate friends, who had seen her in the sick-room, testify to the sense of strength and cheer imparted to the patient by her mere presence and bearing, and have recognized in their description the same characteristics that inspired teachers with confidence in the soundness of her judgment and the genuineness of her sympathy. Whenever I hear ardent advocates of the advancement of woman say that boys' schools stand especially in need of the refining influence of women teachers, I say without hesitation, 'Yes, if you can secure the right women'; and, when I stop to ask myself what I mean by 'the right women,' I find that I am thinking of Miss Crocker.

"Miss Crocker seemed always to know, as soon as the annual examination of candidates for positions had been held, just what the qualifications of all the successful candidates were, what their experience had been, and where they had gained it, what their personal characteris-

tics were, and who could be applied to for trustworthy information about them. Hence, as a school principal, I found it to my advantage to consult her whenever a vacancy was to be filled; and, whenever I consulted her, I received substantial help. She was accessible not merely at her office and in office hours, but at her home and at all hours. I fear that this readiness to respond to such calls for help may sometimes have led me to bring school matters to her attention at times when a proper regard for private rights should have taught me to wait; but I was never made to feel this. Her time and her knowledge were always at the disposal of those to whom the interests of the schools were confided.

"As is well known, Miss Crocker's interests and influence were strongest in the direction of the natural sciences; and the high schools to-day, especially in the departments of botany and zoölogy, bear the marks of her enlightened activity. She was efficiently instrumental in bringing the teachers of these subjects under the personal instruction of specialists at their laboratories, and in organizing classes of teachers to be trained in the experimental method of teaching these and related subjects. Through the Committee on Supplies, and especially through the enlightened liberality of such friends of education as Mrs. Shaw and Mrs. Hemenway, she procured for the high-school libraries the best works of reference

in science, and through systematic annual appropriations secured ample materials from year to year for experimental work on the part of the pupils.

"Miss Crocker's death brought a sense of personal loss to hundreds of teachers who had come to depend on her for wise counsel, or who had enjoyed the inestimable privilege of her friendship. To the schools her death brought a loss that was well-nigh irreparable.

"JOHN TETLOW.

"MARCH 11, 1893."

The story of the election of women on the School Committee in Boston has been told in the memoir of Miss May. All eyes turned to Miss Crocker as a most desirable member of the board, and she was elected in 1874 to represent Ward 11.

By the changes made in the election of the School Committee and the appointment of a Board of Supervisors, a new opportunity was opened for women in the care of the educational interests of Boston; and Miss Crocker was elected supervisor in 1876. It was the first instance of a public office of such trust and honor with a handsome salary being given to a woman.

No one could have been better fitted to discharge its duties than she was, except in the one respect of physical strength. She had long suffered from some delicacy

of the throat or lungs; and, while seldom really ill, she did not give the impression of a robust frame equal to the demands which her active intellect, zealous energy, and conscientious work made upon it. But, if she suffered from this cause, the schools did not: they always had her best service. She was not careless, and did not squander her health; and she bore the great amount of labor in her work, besides the strain of many personal cares and sorrows, with an endurance which astonished even her friends. One of the teachers writes with indignation of the demands constantly made upon her by the teachers, who lay in wait for her when she returned home to her meals or for much needed rest. She even attributes her early death to this cause. We can hardly blame the teachers; for her overflowing kindness and sympathy invited this encroachment, and she was so earnest and happy in helping them that they could not realize what it was costing her.

But this experience should be a lesson to us all in confining our demands upon officials to office hours, instead of breaking in upon those which should be given to rest and home duties and pleasures.

This word from another of the teachers in the high school voices the universal feeling in regard to her work:

"I find it difficult to say anything of Miss Crocker that in any degree satisfies me. So long a time has passed

since her death that many things suitable for publication have lost definiteness in my mind; while many other things are unsuitable for public record, although perhaps furnishing her highest meed of praise.

"Clear and vivid in my memory, however, stands out the fact that to her, in large measure, is due the successful breaking down of the prejudice against the entrance of women into such official positions in connection with the schools.

"Gentle, yet firm; of unfailing courtesy, yet of assured convictions and of readiness in the expression of them; unwavering in her determination to advance the good or to redress the wrong, and yet never aggressive; liberal-minded, far-sighted, and clear-sighted, dignified and self-possessed, — she commanded the attention and retained the confidence of all about her.

"Whatever opposition there may have been to the placing of women in official positions in connection with the schools could hardly fail to melt away in such a presence, and it was a rare good fortune that brought her to us in those early days.

"Because of these qualities, and of this success, she was of the greatest service to women teachers. She must have been the counsellor and helper of a large number who otherwise would have been without an adviser, and who felt an unfaltering confidence in her wisdom. In her sym-

pathy with the teachers she made their cause her own, and by her own success added to the dignity of their position."

She made the same impression of personal courtesy on the pupils. After parting with the teachers, she would turn to the school with a "Good-by, boys!" that went to every heart. No speaker was so welcome at the annual visitations, where she often, in a few words, gave advice and encouragement that helped the hearers through life.

Another teacher writes: —

"When I came to Boston to teach, I had the good fortune to be appointed to teach the natural sciences in a high school which was under Miss Crocker's supervision. She soon impressed me as extremely patient, helpful, and unwearyingly faithful to her high conception of the duties of her position.

"Her aim seemed to be not merely to supervise, but to help the teacher and uplift and inspire the pupils, to teach them manners and morals as well as science.

"She never forgot to address the class on entering the school-room, nor other small courtesies so often overlooked in the hurry of class-work.

"The pupils felt that she was their friend, and were happy in her gentle presence.

"She led many teachers to take extended courses in natural history; and she was the means, not only of introducing the best methods of teaching zoölogy, but also the best

books and charts on the subject, so that her influence for good has been permanent.

"She was progressive, full of ideas and enthusiasm, had remarkable courage, fidelity, and good sense, and, in a quiet way, righted many wrongs."

One teacher, with many other appreciative words of Miss Crocker, writes: —

"I remember one day having occasion to make some remarks to a class of little girls upon the subject of good manners, and they were trying to tell me what constituted a true lady. I asked whether they could name some one whom they considered a true lady, one whom they would like to resemble when they grew up; and they at once replied, 'Miss Crocker.'" She continues: "Dear Miss Crocker! I am powerless to do her justice. She has left a gap that will never be filled. Time has not healed the wound. We miss her as much to-day as ever."

I can hardly refrain from saying one word of the group of friends who surrounded Miss Crocker in the Normal School, and remained devotedly loyal to her ever after. Mrs. Walton, who served as substitute principal while Miss Crocker was a pupil, says: —

"As I look back, it seems to me that the school at that time was especially fortunate in the character of its pupils. Among them were many names which represent well-known and honored women to-day, who hold impor-

tant positions in schools and colleges, or who hold an honored place in social life; but, of all that galaxy, Miss Crocker's light, as a whole, was strongest and farthest reaching."

In the midst of all this beneficent activity the end came swiftly and suddenly. Her illness of a few days was hardly known to her friends when the terrible announcement came that her earthly work was over.

I last saw her at a school exhibition. I knew that she had passed through a summer of much personal trial with little rest, and I was equally surprised and pleased to see her courage unabated and her health apparently uninjured. I thought that many years of service were before her. Nor was I wrong. Although death closed her immediate work, her influence remains active and powerful for the cause of education to which she gave her life.

She died Oct. 10, 1886. A simple funeral service was held at her own house; but, at the earnest desire of the many who honored her, a public service was also held in the Church of the Disciples, which she had attended.

Mr. James Freeman Clarke officiated in both places.

The Normal School, with which she was so long connected as pupil and teacher, has appropriately named for her the "Crocker Memorial Hall," in perpetual memory of her services.

"What shall I say to the girls at the Normal School?"

I asked, when about to visit it. "Tell them to be like Lucretia Crocker," was the wise answer. Happy shall I be if I have, in this brief memoir, helped them to know and to imitate what she was!

The Crocker Hall was built in 1886 and partially destroyed by fire Christmas, 1887, but has since been rebuilt, and is now in use.

I will not intrude upon the sacred precincts of family life to tell what Miss Crocker was in her home and her family. Like a light illuminating her whole being was the tender love which, beginning in the home, spread abroad to bless many a heart. Their fires were kindled from it, but they took nothing away from it.

Such, too, was her religious life, — rarely spoken of, but filling all her work. A friend sends me, as the best expression of her feeling, the beautiful hymn of Samuel Johnson, beginning, —

> "Father, in thy mysterious presence kneeling,
> Fain would our souls feel all thy kindling love."

The third verse was her favorite, and it brings her deepest life before us: —

> "In the heart's depths a peace serene and holy
> Abides; and when pain seems to have her will,
> Or we despair, oh, may that peace rise slowly,
> Stronger than agony, and we be still."

An old Normal School friend has kindly loaned me a short series of letters ranging from 1853 to 1873. While they are mostly brief business notes referring to the arrangements for Normal School reunions, they yet serve to prove her constant interest in this school, and her willingness to give time and thought to the smallest details concerning its welfare. They show also her warm interest in all that affected her home. She alludes to the influence of sorrow and to the care of her mother during her recovery from an accident. In 1865 she alludes to the perilous times. She also speaks with great interest of Miss Hall's Geography, of the publication of which she took entire charge. She frequently alludes to the arrangement of botany classes with Mr. Russell, Horace Mann, and others; and, in a note dated June 29 (1871), she adds these pleasant words of her own interest in that study: —

"*My dear Miss Peirce,* — I meant to tell you sooner that I read your essay with pleasure; but 'time flies' with me, as I presume it does with you. I know you have enjoyed your botany all these years from the tenor of your article; and I often feel how much it has been to me. There are times in life when one wants and needs to get very close to nature, and when a little knowledge helps to unveil so much beauty that it fills the thought, as nothing else could, with a kind of sacred delight.

"I am always thankful, too, for those Newton days: they brought something better than mere knowledge. I liked, a few years ago, to hear Mr. Emerson say of our time, 'There was a religious spirit in the school.'

"I thank you for your kind remembrance, and want to ask you some time to put a few seeds of the 'Pseudo Plantanus' in an envelope for me. I first learned from your article that the embryo shows through.

"Do you find good places to botanize in Cambridge? I wish I could go oftener.

"Yours with love,

"L. Crocker.

"90 Rutland Square."

Parts of three letters will show the spirit with which she took up the work on the School Committee. Shrinking as she did, in her natural delicacy of feeling, from all publicity, she yet did not hesitate to bear any unpleasant results of a step which she thought to be necessary to the interests of public education. June 15 she says: —

"My class closes this week. I never accomplish half I want to, and you may be sure no teaching has ever been to me like that of the Normal School. Private school girls are very agreeable in many respects, but few of them recognize the duty or pleasure of real study."

I give a brief letter of Miss May, and one from Miss Crocker which binds them pleasantly together, and is characteristic of them both: —

"DECEMBER, 1873, probably.

"*Dear Miss Crocker,* — At a meeting of the Club Committee on Schools yesterday I was asked to ask you if you would write a word for one of the newspapers, say the *Advertiser*, in furtherance of our work; that is, the putting women on the School Committee. The particular point I was to ask you to treat, if you would, was the reason why teachers wish it; that is, those of them who do wish it.

"Did you see George B. Emerson's letter in the *Advertiser* about a fortnight ago? If so, perhaps it would be well for you to mention the fact that he had already spoken, which would be a reason why others should bear their testimony. We hope you will feel like saying yes, and, unlike the Scripture son, doing it too. If you will, we will take the small trouble requisite to get your article inserted. We shall find it a pleasure. I hope you will sometimes come to the club on the third Monday this winter. They being my special days for going, I naturally want all the good folk who belong to be there then.

"Ever heartily yours,

"ABBY W. MAY."

"*My dear Miss Peirce*, — Do you think me very shabby not to have acknowledged your last note with the paragraph I desired? I have only waited expecting daily to see it in print or to hear from Miss May.

"You know, of course, that she has become a candidate, and that, if we are legally admitted, she will work with me on the School Committee. I do not want the added work, nor have I enjoyed the recent publicity; but I rejoice that the principle has triumphed. Mr. Stearns sent me an earnest congratulation, and to-day Mrs. Walton writes of her satisfaction.

"To-day Miss May writes me that she was just about to send the article to the press, when affairs took so unexpectedly favorably a turn that she thought the greatest amount of letting alone was best.

"I am sure you will perceive her motives and interpret her course rightly, besides its being the best policy to let the ball roll which had been set in motion, and not rouse opposition, perhaps, by calling out teachers not favorably disposed.

"You will see that it became a personal matter with her also. I hope you did not give time valuable for some other purpose to fulfilling my request. You certainly have my thanks for your readiness. Do come and see me some time! Yours ever,

"L. Crocker."

"DECEMBER, 1873 (?), Thursday Morning.

"*My dear Miss Peirce*,— Your friendly and private word is a balm to my wounded feelings just now. I had no idea when I said 'yes' last week to the request of a gentleman desirous of starting the question of a woman on the School Committee of our ward, that I should be handled in the papers thus, even before a nomination. It is very embarrassing; and, if my principles were not firmer than my courage, I should be weak indeed.

"I only expect to be a victim."

(How little did she foresee the work before her!)

"This was all that was asked, without probably the 'ghost of a chance of an election,' so that the movement may be started for all the future. I feel almost a martyr now. It is hateful to be heralded; but I gave myself to the question two or more years ago, and so could not backslide, whatever personal annoyance came of it. I was intending three day ago to grant the request of Miss May, and send her a paragraph on the point mentioned. I couldn't possibly now, though it might never transpire who did it. But don't you want to say briefly why the good teachers hail the movement, how they will appreciate the sympathy and co-operation of women? and, if the young lady teachers who are only teaching to provide themselves with 'fuss and feathers' for a time do not welcome

the prospect, it is because they know they will meet careful supervision.

"If you like to send me a paragraph, I will send it to Miss May, telling her she could not expect me to say a word, but I send something from a *bona fide* teacher.

"If not moved to do so, don't trouble yourself: I don't want to press the matter on, but only to redeem a promise to Miss May by proxy; for I met her after the note and said I would write a word in a few days.

"Just in time for the post.

"Yours ever,

"L. Crocker."

ABBY W. MAY

PHILANTHROPIST

ABBY WILLIAMS MAY,

PHILANTHROPIST.

The life of Abby W. May should be fully recorded, not because of her great achievement in one direction, but because it will preserve the memory of a woman living a simple, true, and grand life in this century of woman's development, and will be full of suggestion and encouragement to those who are struggling to carry forward the great work for humanity in which she bore her part. It is good for us to know what influences helped her to become what she was, what hindrances stood in her way, and how much she accomplished.

She builded up a character which was a tower of strength to those who gathered around her.

Abby Williams May was the youngest child of Samuel and Mary (Goddard) May, there being six children in all, — four brothers and one sister.

Her father was a merchant in Boston, in which city he lived and died. He was a man of strong, upright, and resolute character. These Puritan traits are reproduced in

all the family, but their keen intelligence and progressive tendencies have made them liberal in their religious views.

Mr. May was one of the last to be called familiarly by the old New England title of "Deacon," which office he held in the church in Hollis Street under the pastorate of Rev. John Pierpont; and he was one of the first "to give Theodore Parker a chance to be heard in Boston."

As Abby was the youngest child, she knew her father first when he seemed to her somewhat advanced in life; and, when he died at the great age of ninety-three, she said, "I never remembered my father as a young man before." The idealizing power of death seemed to bring his whole life into her knowledge. She was like him in his love of method and "fondness for keeping things as they are" in minor matters.

Her mother had first the good influences of a simple country home in Brookline, and then the advantages of education and society in her uncle's wealthy home in Boston. Her eldest son, at her funeral, said of her : —

"I do think, while I make no peculiar claim on her account, that my mother's life has been a consistently true one during all the seventy years in which I have known her, and true to a high purpose. This purpose rose and broadened as she acted upon it, led her steadily forward, and inspired the new courage and faith which each new step demanded. I have no reason to think that it ever occurred

to her that this purpose had in it aught unusual or worthy of remark. To her it was only an obvious necessity. This purpose, I believe, simply was to do her duty to the extent of her power where, in the providence of God, her lot was cast."

She had the gift of home-making. "Our home was the happiest," said her eldest daughter,—"large, cheerful, sunny rooms, with the bright wood fires, and a father and mother devoted to their home and their family." The individuality of the children was respected, and all had their fair chance.

But, while Mrs. May was the best of wives and mothers, the four walls of the house did not confine her affections nor her activity; and, after the children grew up, she turned her attention to the reforms of anti-slavery and temperance, in which she led her husband, and in which he so heartily joined with her. She was interested in all the movements for the improvement of woman's condition, and did not hesitate to occupy an unusual position when it was necessary to aid in a good cause. She was not less active in private benevolence. Thus our friend was emphatically well-born and well-bred, and the heir of the noble traits of both parents.

From some unknown cause Abby was always a very delicate child; and at one time the family physicians gave her up, saying "they could do no more." But the mother

and the nurse said, "While there is life, there is hope"; and she was saved to us.

Abby first went to a little "Infant School" kept by Miss Brush.

In 1836, having suffered from an attack of measles, her mother sent her to the celebrated community at Brook Farm, under the especial care of Mrs. Ripley, hoping that the active life and good air would benefit her. The child was a little homesick; and, although she assisted Mrs. Ripley in her work, cooking and housework were never much to her taste. She was too young to retain any strong impression from the peculiar influences of this place. About 1837 she went with her sister to a school kept by the Misses Smith, where she was undoubtedly well grounded in the three R's, as was the fashion of the time.

A school friend remembers her at Mr. Folsom's school in 1839. She afterward (in 1841) went to the school of Mr. George B. Emerson, for whom she always cherished a warm regard. She said of him, "He certainly is one of the bright lights of the age." She finished her school life July 3, 1847. Her attainments at school were not unusual, but she had a good English education and good habits of reading and thought. She afterward studied both French and German. She was very thorough and methodical by nature, and read systematically and conscientiously, as much from a sense of duty as from inclination. She

was very fond of keeping accounts, and had remarkable financial ability.

An interesting anecdote of her childhood given by her sister shows the intense moral earnestness of her nature as well as her religious feeling and her desire to impart good to others: —

"We always from her childhood realized that she was bright. I remember her arranging chairs in our nursery for her audience and building up with tables, crickets, etc., a pulpit for herself, so that on Sunday afternoons she would collect all whom she could from the household, and conduct a regular service, reading hymns, making a little prayer, and preaching a sermon. I can remember but little about it, excepting that we (my Brother F. and I) often felt rather bored by sitting so long; but mother desired us to do it. The service was earnest, and the elders doubtless considered it remarkable."

The mother's wisdom is shown in respecting rather than laughing at this earnestness.

At the suggestion of Mr. Alcott, she kept a journal regularly, from which a few extracts are taken.

In 1845 Theodore Parker began preaching in Boston; and she became a regular attendant at his church, and took part in the Sunday-school and worked on the Benevolent Committee. "Took a class of little girls. I hope I may give them some ideas. They, I am sure, will give me some."

Oct. 23, 1847, she says: "Went to Mr. Parker's to attend the first meeting of the Bible-class. There were about thirty-eight ladies there, several of whom I knew. I enjoyed the afternoon." She also worked with the Provident Association and the Tuckerman Sewing Circle. One entry gives an idea of her method and adherence to a task, even when it had become uninteresting. She began to work a screen in October, 1846, and it apparently was slow of accomplishment; for on Nov. 1, 1847, she writes, "Began to work on my screen, which I intend to work upon for two hours every day until it is finished." She fulfilled her task.

Her girlhood was spent in Boston, in an educated and refined circle, but under the stimulating influences of the active reforms of the day. By marriage her family was connected with the Alcotts, and she had an intimate relation with Louisa. She had a warm admiration for Mrs. Alcott, and prized a correspondence with her very highly. She attended many of Mr. Alcott's conversations with great interest; but her keen sense of humor made her very sensible of his peculiarities, which often excited her mirth.

She had a profound admiration for Mr. Emerson, and never failed to hear him on every opportunity. She was thus in accord with the best thought of that Transcendental period; and, while never a hard student, she was a methodical reader, and her mind was very active. A native poise

and good sense prevented her from being carried away by any of the vagaries of the day.

In 1847 she records reading Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy" with a schoolmate.

This same year she, with seven other young girls, formed a class for reading, beginning with Spenser's "Fairie Queene," which, she says, "I like very much." "The Bothie of Toper na Fuosich" and Lowell's witty and wicked "Fable for Critics," which she heartily enjoyed, followed. A Dante class was another means of grace. With only Cary's translation, we still learned something of the old Florentine. Plato was another subject which Mr. Alcott and Mr. Emerson heartily approved, saying they would gladly meet any young women who read such authors.

But the strongest influence came from Theodore Parker, and her journals are full of abstracts of his sermons. Many years later she said to a friend depressed by grief: "Why do you not read something of Theodore Parker's every day? He gives you such an uplift." But, although educated and strongly influenced by this circle of thinkers, and intensely concerned with the moral questions of the times, her nature was too broad and original to be confined to any sect or class. Her religious life was deep and sincere. She had been brought up in the liberal views to which many have to attain through severe struggle; and

she felt that those of different faith might have, seemed to have, a warmth of feeling, a religious zeal, a something, which perhaps her friends lacked, and which she might gain elsewhere. She often quoted the saying of a friend, "Experiencing religion seems to consist in joining a church you were not brought up in." She was for a time interested in the preaching of a Baptist, and also of a Methodist clergyman, and undoubtedly gained from the experience a catholicity in her religious views which saved her from bigotry or contempt for any sincere religious feelings. But, fruitful of good as this experience was, she returned to her old allegiance, and, as will appear later, took up an active connection with the Unitarian Church, which she believed to be representative of the truest Christianity.

She frequently attended the Roman Catholic services in Easter week, which she enjoyed very much. An extract from a letter will illustrate these thoughts: —

"I have been made very sorry by hearing Mr. —— speak. I never heard any Sunday service — please God, I never shall again — that seemed to me so far away in its interest from the highest things we all know. And I long to let you know what sort of husks he is dispensing to these people, in hopes you can influence him to do differently. Why, dear ——, if you would walk into that desk, and simply say,' 'My friends,' as you would say it, you

would do incomparably more for their elevation than —— in these two Sunday afternoons."

Probably her first philanthropic work outside her home was in a sewing-school in connection with Mr. Parker's church, where she diligently instructed the young waifs from the street in this homely art. Many comic scenes enlivened the work; but my strongest recollection is of an earnest conversation as we walked home one spring afternoon, which revealed to me the intense earnestness of her moral nature struggling with the great problems of life opening to her. I went into the large, cool parlor of the pleasant home in Atkinson Street, and we continued our talk till the lengthening shadows drove me home; but from that time I date a friendship "which knew no retiring ebb." She bore the faithful rebuke of a friend nobly. She often questioned, "Was I not impatient or irritable?" She did not flatter her friend, but she appreciated her inmost nature. She had many friends very closely attached to her,— younger friends, who idolized her, and waited upon her, and saved her time and strength by their service; new friends, to whom she was like a draught of the elixir of life,— and sometimes this gave pain to others, who felt bereaved. But, withal, she was never disloyal to an old friend, who always found her place kept for her, even if another was in the foreground for a time.

A little anecdote will show both her influence upon

younger friends and her humor. She was carefully courteous in asking service from others, even of those whose office rendered it proper for them to render it. She would say, "Would you mind going out to mail this letter?" etc. One of her adorers once answered: "Miss May, it hurts me to have you ask if I would be willing to do anything for you. Don't you know that, if you wished me to go out and stand on my head on the Brimmer fountain, I would do it at once?" "Well, I do wish it," she replied. "Go!" "And such was her power over me," said her friend, "that for a moment I felt that I had got to go, until her hearty laugh brought me back to my senses."

From 1856 to 1860 she was a visitor of the Provident Association, and about the same time engaged in the work of the Reform School at Lancaster. She took her mother's place on the board of the Aunty Gwynn Temporary Home, and was clerk of the corporation for some years.

In 1850 the School of Design for Women was established in Boston. It was intended to open a new avenue to employment for women in design as connected with the mechanic arts. A gentleman from the school of South Kensington was appointed teacher, and for a time he roused a great enthusiasm for the work. Some of the leading manufacturers encouraged the enterprise by contributions of money and personal interest. Miss May had a strong feeling that women should fit themselves for some

work as a provision against coming need, and she joined the school as a pupil in 1851. She possessed no special talent in this direction, however, but was interested in the purpose of the school, and became a member of the committee who had charge of it. As she was the youngest member, she did not then have opportunity to show her remarkable business ability.

She gave some attention to music, in which she had great enjoyment, especially in the sacred music of the oratorio and the church. She took lessons of Dresel and of Lange, and with her usual fidelity practised her hour a day, until the war claimed all her time and thought.

In 1852 Miss May visited Europe with some relatives, spending about six months away from home. This journey undoubtedly developed her mind and enriched her life; but she suffered from a sun-stroke in Rome, from which she did not fully recover, always feeling the effect of it in hot weather.

In 1853 a new experience came to her, which gave her a companion for life and fresh and interesting responsibility. Her youngest brother, Frederic, who was very dear to her, had married the previous year; and his wife died at the birth of her first child. Abby undertook the care of the little girl, and at once devoted herself to her education. She was very careful of the health of the child, insisting especially upon sufficient sleep. Her first experiment in

educating her outside the home was in a little private class of three children in a friend's house.

In 1859 Dr. Marie E. Zakrzewska came to Boston, at the request of the trustees of the New England Female Medical College, to take the chair of obstetrics. She made it a condition that she should have the opportunity of clinical instruction for her pupils and a committee of women to assist her in the management of this department. Miss May, as secretary, made the first annual report of the hospital in 1860. It is an admirable paper,— full, concise, and tender in feeling. One of her characteristic expressions is, "A paying patient in every respect." She continued in this office, doing valuable service while the connection with the college lasted.

Miss May was then, as always, an ardent homœopathist. One day she came to the hospital with a violent headache.

Dr. Zakrzewska proposed to prescribe for her; but she refused, adding that she would rather "die under homœopathic than live under allopathic treatment." But she presently asked the doctor what medicine she would prescribe for her now. "A cup of hot water," answered the doctor. "Oh, that is what I have been longing for all the way here!" she replied.

At one time she had been a patient at the celebrated water-cure of Dr. Robert Wesselhoeft at Brattleboro, and felt great benefit from the treatment. The social influ-

ences were delightful, and she sometimes said that "was the happiest time of her life."

In 1850 the family removed from the early home in Atkinson Street to No. 5 Franklin Street. This street was then not given up to business. It had a green plot in the middle, and was a pleasant as well as convenient situation. In 1857 the family again removed to Hollis Street. In 1861 she took a normal course in gymnastics of Dr. Dio Lewis, and gave the valedictory address at the graduation September 5. She did this partly with a view to a means of self-support if it should become necessary, and partly for the benefit to her health which she found from it. She gave a few lessons at Miss Peabody's kindergarten and at Miss Watson's school in Roxbury.

In 1861 came the greatest event of our history since the Revolution, and Miss May's whole soul was absorbed in the war which opened the way for the abolition of slavery. It was a great strength and happiness to her that her whole family were heartily in sympathy with her. I once asked her, "Does not your mother feel this excitement painfully?" "No," she said: "she has so long been full of anxiety on the subject of slavery that now, when she sees the country is fairly aroused and taking part so strongly against it, she feels confident in the final result, and is calmer and happier than ever."

"The New England Women's Auxiliary Association, in

which Miss May was an enthusiastic worker and leader, was a branch of the United States Sanitary Commission.

"It was in the autumn of 1861 that one or two women of Boston were stirred by a circular of Mr. Olmsted's to try to organize the women of New England into an association that should work for sick and wounded soldiers systematically and efficiently, and one of the first names suggested as that of a most desirable ally was that of Abby W. May.

"At this time Dr. Howe was sole agent of the Sanitary Commission for New England, and in his small office in Bromfield Street received and forwarded such boxes of hospital supplies as were sent to him. He was at first inclined to think that it was not worth while to do more, or to organize work of the women of New England. But he was soon persuaded by Dr. Bellows to become vice-president of the large association of which Dr. John Ware was first president. This was Dec. 5, 1861.

"There were three Committees, Executive, Financial, and Industrial. Miss May was at first secretary of the Executive Committee, while Mrs. Parkman was chairman; but, after the latter was called away from the country in February, 1862, Miss May was chosen chairman, and continued in that capacity till the association dissolved in March, 1866.

"To most of those who worked under her in that commit-

tee she was the embodiment of what a chairman should be, and by several she was always spoken of and to as 'Chair' as long as she lived. Her methods of conducting meetings were wonderfully business-like. No time was wasted in useless talk; and at the same time how amusing she was! She had a keen appreciation of the ludicrous, which, combined with her enthusiasm for work, made those weekly Executive Committee meetings afternoons to be looked forward to and remembered with pleasure.

"The members of the committee changed from year to year, as other duties claimed them: only Miss May and Miss Sarah C. Williams were actually working from the very beginning to the very end. Miss May made a trip on one of the Hospital Transports, and came back saddened by the terrible sufferings she had witnessed, and with her sympathies deepened, so that her work in writing reports for the newspapers and in travelling and making addresses in country towns was more effectual and comprehensive and more personally touching than before.

"The ties that bind that committee together are very strong, largely owing to the charm of the personality of their chairman. Every year since the war they have met together on the anniversary of the opening of their first office for interchange of memories and good fellowship.

"Since the death of Miss May the jovial tea-parties have been given up; but the friendly remnant still exchange

greetings on the 13th of December, and the remembrances of the busy, satisfying working days of the war-times deepen the old feeling of regard and admiration for our leader.

"She had a very remarkable power of controlling and inspiring and converting most varied material. Older workers prejudiced by their faith in methods that had served well in other fields, and young hands chafing against what seemed to them unnecessary forms, yielded alike to the charm of her clear, far-seeing mind and persuasive voice. And, after the war was over, the work that continued for the returning sufferers and the destitute families was carried on by her with such sympathy and tenderness of personal feeling that her comrades sometimes longed to protect her."

I have given this account in the words of one of her fellow-workers; but it is difficult for even them to express the depth of thought and feeling that she put into the work, and the wonderful inspiration she became to others. Some of them were young, and quite new to the tremendous moral questions involved in the struggle. She sustained them amid the trials of the hour, and became to them a guiding star of faith and hope that they never lost sight of. She was thoroughly in her element. She liked to deal with large interests, to discuss and work with her peers, to have her full powers called out, and to see the results of

her work. The tenderness of her nature was brought forth, as well as her strength; and her heart warmed to the loving ones in their country homes who sent the comforters and socks and goodies for the sick soldiers, as well as to the hero on the battlefield. She often went out to the country towns to speak to the people, to animate them and give them instruction for the conduct of the work.

It was now that her admirable powers as a presiding officer were called into full play.

In an address at Hampton Mrs. Julia Ward Howe gave an account of her first experience of Miss May in this capacity. She herself was presiding at a meeting of friends of the Fair for the Cretans; and, not then having much experience, she found it difficult to control the meeting. Some one said to her, "You should ask Miss May to preside." She did not quite see why she should ask one so much younger to take this place; but, following the advice, she quickly discovered the power which could bring discordant elements into order, and carry on business quickly and thoroughly.

It was interesting to see her preside at a meeting where gentlemen were present who were unaccustomed to the action of women at business meetings. The beautiful blending of authority and courtesy with which she conducted impressed them with wonder and respect.

That she was sometimes a little over-commanding may

be admitted; but it was usually in the interest of despatching business, and I have known her to win the hearts even of those to whom I have told her she was too imperative.

Miss May was anxious to see the work of the Sanitary Commission near the seat of war; and on June 11, 1862, she, with Mrs. M. C. E. Barnard and Mrs. Trotter, started on the "Daniel Webster" for the Pamunkey River, a little below "White House." There she and Mrs. Barnard were transferred to the "Elm City," with sick and (afterward) wounded on board. I give a brief account from her journal. The journey ended on Saturday, June 21, at Albany, where the wounded were speedily taken to the hospital; and before night the traveller was at home again.

June 14, 1862.—"Passed Capes Charles and Henry very early, and were in Chesapeake Bay. Warm, bright, and most lovely. We watched the views. York River was entered about nine o'clock. . . . The York River is charming. The shores are rather low, but beautifully wooded, except where they have been cleared for batteries and earthworks. The houses were widely scattered. A few were handsome, but the majority were Negro huts. We saw many contrabands, but few white. The river was full of boats and barges, carrying troops and supplies. Yorktown looked poorly enough. West Point is charmingly situated just at the confluence of the Pamunkey and Mat-

tapony. We left the latter on our right, and took the Pamunkey, the crookedest specimen of a river that one could wish to see. It wound so that we sailed toward all points of the compass. The shores were exquisite, so green and lovely it was hard to fancy war was so near, where everything looked so peaceful; and yet there was a blight over everything,—at least, to my thought there was,—and I felt sad as I reflected how many years it would take to vitalize this degenerate land. God is giving us a chance now. May he give us to be equal to the duty, because faithful to himself! The river was very narrow, and all alive with boats. Navigation is a little difficult for a ship drawing so much water as ours. . . . At about 3.30 we reached our destination, a little below White House, and anchored."

On June 16 Miss May and Mrs. Barnard were transferred to the "Elm City."

"Soon we had a state-room assigned us and our wards. We went at once to work. The prospect was dire. The boat shockingly dirty, some of the patients in the delirium of typhoid, and a general hubbub, owing to the fact that one hundred and fifty patients were brought on yesterday, who must be carried off to-day from a change of plans. My ward was in the hold, and very dirty. I had it swept at once, and provided the men with tea. . . . After I had finished the work in my ward, I was told that a large num-

ber of wounded men were expected soon after midnight, and would be to feed, and was asked to sit up or be ready to get up. I chose the latter. . . . About one o'clock they arrived, rebels and Unionists, all sorts; and I mounted, and helped to furnish them with tea and bread and butter, which they seemed glad enough to get. . . . Next morning early we sailed."

June 17.— "At about 5 P.M. we came to anchor off Fortress Monroe. . . . Later the surgeon came on board, and informed us that we were to load up with convalescents from the neighboring hospitals, having first discharged the rebels, who must be kept near the lines, to be exchanged for our own wounded prisoners."

On June 18 the boat was at anchor off Fortress Monroe, and the ladies had a chance to go on shore for a little look at the fort, etc.

She writes that in the afternoon "numbers of soldiers were constantly brought on board, filling up our number to about four hundred. I had one hundred and fifteen in my ward. . . . My men were mostly convalescent, and hobbled up on deck, so that I had very little to do for them, except to see them properly fed and clothed to the extent of the wardrobe's limit," etc.

They sailed on the 19th from Fortress Monroe, arrived at quarantine ground, New York, on Friday, the 20th, and on the 21st landed the men at Albany.

In 1863 President Lincoln took the important step of calling into the service of the government those who were most interested in the result of the war, the colored citizens, both those who had long enjoyed freedom and the lately enfranchised. Governor Andrew warmly seconded his plans, and at once enlisted colored men to form the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers. He wisely chose the finest officers at his command to drill and lead these troops, and their noble record is a part of the glorious history of the war. Two other regiments were subsequently formed, and sent to the field. Friends of the colored troops wished to give to the men those comforts which the government could not furnish, and a meeting was called on February 27 to form a committee for this purpose. At the second meeting Miss May presided, and an Executive Committee was formed, of which she was one of the vice-presidents. She was present at most of the meetings, and served on various sub-committees. She reported at one time on "mittens, combs, and shears," which she had procured for the soldiers, and at another presented a design for the banner, on one side of which should be a figure of Justice; and she was also on the committee to provide the regiment with a band. Her name does not appear in the records of the last years of this work, probably because all her strength and time were absorbed in the work of the Sanitary Commission.

A little later she did not fail to take an active interest in the New England Freedman's Aid Society, and she was elected on the Finance Committee. But this position did not give much scope to her powers, as the Treasurer received the money, and the Teachers' Committee took charge of spending it.

In 1866 she went as delegate from this society to a convention of the various societies, or Freedman's Union Commission, at Baltimore, to elect a president for the National Union. It was then an unusual thing for women to be appointed on such occasions; and she and her colleague found themselves as great a source of embarrassment to the majority of the convention as the colored bishop who also represented a branch society, since a grand supper was to close the exercises, at which the presence of Women and Negroes would be an insupportable anomaly. Still, as the New England Society was an important member of the convention, the delegates were in other respects treated with great attention, which Miss May received with her usual dignified courtesy, while richly enjoying the humor of the peculiar situation.

In 1866 she was transferred to the Committee on Teachers of the New England Society, where she found her right place, and began that union of work with Miss Crocker which proved so fruitful of service in other fields. She took a warm personal interest in the teachers, and

added to the charm of the annual festival, where her little niece was one of the lovely trio of

"Three young maids in friendship met"

who distributed the flowers to the teachers just returned from their labors. The war was over; and, in the sanguine hope that the fourteenth amendment had sufficiently secured the rights of the Negro, and that the school systems of the Southern States would give him equal opportunities of education with the whites, the New England Freedman's Society closed its work. And the noble women who had postponed the discussion of their own claims to citizenship, in order to aid in securing union for the country and freedom for the Negro, now began to reap their reward in the impulse given to the advancement of women in every direction.

While still as broad in her interests as ever, and never deaf to the claims of labor and charity as well as of intellectual and moral progress for all, still the thread of devotion to the cause of women is henceforth conspicuous in all Miss May's thought and work.

She was a full and ardent woman suffragist, and was eager for the time when the admission of women to that right would enable her to put forth her full powers for other work in the interest of humanity. She was vice-president of the Massachusetts Association. She was the

one to propose the annual festival, which she preferred to holding a fair; and she often made bright and telling speeches on these festive occasions.

Miss May's overflowing humor, which sometimes took the form of irony, often led to a misunderstanding of her position on suffrage. On one merry occasion she brought out a newspaper paragraph, in which every objection to woman suffrage was set down with such extreme violence and superb disregard of truth or reason that it was simply comical. But Miss May read it with such expression, and closed so emphatically, "That represents my view," that one of her horror-stricken hearers exclaimed, "Why, Miss May, you really don't think that is so?"

Another movement for women, which succeeded far beyond the expectation of its founders, was the establishment of "The New England Women's Club" in 1868. Evidently, the time was ripe for this step, since, with no concert, clubs were formed almost simultaneously in Boston and New York, which have ever since been the leaders in the great movement throughout the United States.

Many clubs from Maine to Georgia are now joined in a federation for mutual advancement, while many others are springing up everywhere. I think that Miss May was foremost in enlarging the scope of the club from merely social enjoyment to the active discussion of important intellectual and moral themes. Her arrangement of spe-

cial days for separate subjects has been always adhered to, and followed by many other clubs. Yet nobody enjoyed the social fun better than she; and she contributed largely to the delight of the early club teas, when all could gather around the table, and joke and frolic were the order of the day. It is impossible to reproduce the play of her wit and humor, which ran over like a mountain stream; but, like that, it brightened all the air which entered into our circulation, and made us brighter and stronger. She afterwards became treasurer of the club, and managed its finances with marked ability. Her position as chairman of the Work Committee gave her the opportunity of presenting many industrial and economic problems, which she discussed with great earnestness and skill. She had long been interested in the Social Science Association, and she became an active worker in the Boston Co-operative Building Company. She had the power of drawing able people about her, so that her own work was multiplied by their loving help.

But "all work" might have made even this bright mind "dull," and her physical strength was never equal to the activity of her mind. So, when summer came, she sought the needed rest at mountain or seashore, and especially at her beloved "Prout's Neck." This was her most frequent retreat from 1865. Here she revelled in perfect quiet and freedom, and gave free vent to all the fun and nonsense

which gave relaxation to her weary brain. Yet it was amusing to see how she carried her love of method and exactness even into her amusements. Her day was planned as regularly as at home. So many hours devoted to reading, and the newspapers carefully read in their order: if the mail came irregularly, she did not tear off the wrapper to get the latest telegraphic news, but took the oldest paper first. One summer she was fond of "Patience," and had a little French book of the games. Regularly, after dinner, she played three games, taking them in order from the book, and never passing to another till she had succeeded with the first, but, if unsuccessful one day, taking the same game up again on the next.

Then, with a bag filled with books and papers, she took her way with her friend across the fields to the outside rocks, where she passed the afternoon watching the dashing waves. Her letters are full of the enjoyment of nature at this place. At meal-times and evenings she gave free vent to her fun and wit. She was the life of everything, arranging charades and playing games and keeping everybody merry. She indulged her love of simplicity in dress by always wearing a loose flannel sack and short skirt, and on wet days occasionally took her exercise by sawing wood. The good people were much astonished at her taste, but "supposed she had been brought up to it, and got used to it."

But, with all her exuberant fun, it was not all play even at Prout's. She was a benefactor to those in need; and to one family she was indeed guide, guardian, and friend, holding up by wise counsel and ready help the courage of the mother, a young Southern girl, sorely unfitted for the home to which she was brought. Her early love of preaching reappeared, and she was wont to gather the young girls about her, and read and talk with them on the profoundest themes. Many a noble woman now looks back to her as the strongest influence of her life. The words of Emerson, Browning, Plato, as heard from her lips, were never forgotten. One instance of her keen satire remains in recollection. She was severe upon frivolity, and condemned the common waste of time in useless fancy-work. In discoursing upon the "ten talents," she said, "You will answer the Lord, when he asks your account of your one talent, 'Yes, Lord, I have it safe wrapped in a napkin; and, Lord, I've embroidered the napkin.'"

Her conversation was rich in epigrammatic sayings which it is a pity to lose. "A good failure is next best to a good success," was frequently said. She was not easily discouraged by failures; but she loved to take hold of a work vigorously and carry it on to an assured success rather than to plod on in one line all her life.

In 1868 Miss May assisted in the establishment of a Horticultural School for Women, of which she became president. Although it met with some favor from the public, and even from the Horticultural Society, yet it labored under many difficulties, especially, as most industrial schools do, from the want of trained teachers. It grew slowly; and, after about two years' life, it was abandoned on account of the establishment of the Bussey School of Agriculture, which announced that its classes would be open to women. This seemed to render a new appeal for help, either to the legislature or the public, inexpedient; and the income from the small fund was for some time offered to students at the new institution. As it was not used, however, it was finally given to the Institute of Technology for scholarships for women. Miss May took an active part in the management, but her chief interest was in the good effect which she hoped that the outdoor occupation in gardening would have upon the health of women.

In the same year (1868) an Association for the Advancement of Women was formed in New York, of which Miss May soon became a director. This society holds a congress annually in different cities, at which the most important subjects affecting the welfare of women are discussed. She usually took an active part in these meetings. In the midst of the amplitude of skirts and length of trains, she

appeared on the platform in the straight skirt and simple sack which, with her round hat for out-of-doors, were her invariable dress. A smile might at first be excited by this quaint attire; but her commanding personality soon checked it, and every word of hers was listened to with respect and attention. She not only valued simplicity in dress for her own comfort, but believed that it had an important influence on character. She usually took her hat off in church to relieve her tired head.

All this varied activity fitted Miss May for the crowning work of her life in connection with the public schools. I give the history of the movement which secured the appointment of women on the School Committee in the words of her friend and fellow-worker, Miss Lucia M. Peabody.

It will be seen that here her life again unites with that of Miss Crocker.

WOMEN ON SCHOOL BOARDS.

"The Committee on Education of the New England Women's Club had in 1872 taken up the question of the best way to secure the election of women on the Board of School Committee in Boston. In 1873 it was decided to invite men and women known to be interested in this matter to meet and form a plan for securing the election of women on the board this year, if possible.

"Miss May was a member of the committee thus formed; and the result of their efforts was that, at the municipal election in December, four women, among them Miss May and Miss Crocker, were elected from four different wards in the city.

"The members of the School Board were at this time elected by wards, each ward having six representatives, of whom two retired each year. Miss May was elected in Ward 6, and Miss Crocker in Ward 11.

"When the ladies thus returned claimed their seats at the opening meeting of the board, in 1874, the legality of their election was disputed. The city solicitor, having been consulted, gave his opinion against them; and, after much discussion, the board finally refused to admit them, and declared their seats vacant.

"The legislature, however, before the close of its session, enacted a law declaring women eligible to serve as members of School Committee; and at the municipal election, December, 1874, six women, Miss May and Miss Crocker among these, representing six different wards, were elected to serve for three years, beginning January, 1875.

"Once admitted to the board as legally elected members, the ladies were treated with every courtesy, and were assigned their full share of duty, serving on various important committees, and having full opportunity to show their fitness or unfitness for the work.

"In this year, however, an entire change was made in the organization of the School Board, which, under the old method of electing six members from each ward, had grown, as the city had taken in new territory and formed additional wards, to be an unwieldy and cumbrous body, unable to accomplish the necessary work.

"By amendments adopted in the city charter, the number of the board was this year cut down from one hundred and eighteen members to twenty-five. Twenty-four of these were to be elected on a general ticket, and the mayor was *ex-officio* president of the board.

"A new election was therefore held in December, 1875, and an entirely new board chosen, of whom the eight persons receiving the largest number of votes were elected to serve three years, the eight receiving the next largest number two years, and the next eight one year. At this election Miss May was chosen for three years, and Miss Crocker for one. Two other ladies were also elected, one for the term of two years, and one for one year.

"The newly constituted board had much important work before it; and the election of the Board of Supervisors, six in number, was one of the most pressing points. It was urgently desired by many persons, members of the board and others interested in the schools, that Miss Crocker should become one of the supervisors; and in March, having first resigned her position as member of the School

Committee, she was elected to this office, which she held until the time of death.

"Miss May remained upon the board till her term expired, in 1878, and then failed of re-election through the pressure of party action and the too great confidence of her friends, who felt that such work as she had done must inevitably secure recognition, and that no one could wish to put another in her place. But party pressure unfortunately shows little appreciation of the value of individual work; and her services were therefore lost to our city schools after this year, as she refused to become a candidate at subsequent elections.

"It is not easy to tell just how much she accomplished, either in the schools over which she had oversight, for the teachers individually or collectively, or in the board itself, during her connection with it. She was put at once on various standing committees; and, after the reorganization of the School Board in 1876, when important changes in the regulations for the schools were proposed and adopted, she took an active part in frraming these and helping to carry them into effect. Being heartily interested in the work, she gave freely of her thought and time to it, thinking none of the details too insignificant to be worth her attention. Her visits to the school-rooms for which she felt a special responsibility were frequent, and, thanks to her good judgment and kindly sympathy, could

never fail to be helpful. Teachers who were at first bitterly opposed to the innovation of putting a woman in this important position were won over by her wisdom and kindness, and before long came to look upon her as their best friend in school affairs.

"Feeling the importance of forming sympathetic personal relations with the large body of women teachers in the schools, in order to understand their position, their needs, difficulties, and aspirations, Miss May entered heartily into the plan early formed of inviting them to meet the women members of the board for informal and friendly conferences. Several such meetings were held; and topics of much interest in school affairs were simply and frankly discussed, helping the members of the committee better to understand the work of the schools, the difficulties the teachers had to contend with, and the directions in which they could make their influence and assistance most helpful, and showing the teachers that the new departure meant for them a supervision which tried to act heartily with them for the good of the schools in a purely friendly spirit.

"Miss May continued these informal meetings with the groups of teachers with whom she was more immediately connected, in a pleasant and social way, as long as she remained upon the board, and found much profit in them; while the teachers, as they came to know her more and more, fully appreciated the value of her advice, sympathy, and aid.

"It would take too long to speak of the various important measures in relation to the general management of the schools which came up in the board in the course of these years, in all of which Miss May took part. She gave much time and thought, first, in sub-committee meetings, aiding to form plans and preparing reports, and afterwards took much interest in the practical working of the methods finally adopted.

"The experience thus gained was very valuable, and would have made her more and more useful, had she remained in this office.

"Miss May was, I think, one of the first to try to induce the girls in high schools to dress simply on graduation day. Partly, at least, through her efforts, elaborate and expensive dressing received a check, which has not, perhaps, yet ceased to be effective. Certainly, for some years, greater simplicity was practised, thus saving the *poor* girls a painful comparison with those who were wealthy, or freeing them from the temptation of spending more than they could afford."

Circulars on this subject, of which she wrote one, were sent out for three successive years.

The failure to re-elect Miss May was the immediate cause of the movement to secure school suffrage for women, and of the formation of the Massachusetts School Suffrage Association. As this society has lately pub-

lished a history of its origin and its work, I shall quote very briefly from this account prepared by its careful secretary, referring to it for fuller details: —

"The school suffrage movement in Massachusetts arose from the failure to secure the re-election of Miss Abby W. May on the School Board of Boston. Judge Russell, who was much interested in the matter, declared that two thousand women voters were needed in the city 'to save the schools,' since the School Committee had become so largely a stepping-stone to political preferment. A petition was sent to the legislature, asking for the extension of school suffrage to women; and a hearing was granted, at which many old citizens were present, some of whom were not in favor of general suffrage. The result was that on the 10th of April, 1879, a bill enabling women to vote for School Committee was passed by the legislature of Massachusett,— 129 ayes to 69 noes.

"On the 15th of November following a meeting of women voters of Boston passed the following resolutions at Freeman Place Chapel: —

" *Whereas* it is recognized by all good citizens that the schools are the most important of our institutions, since in them are trained morally and intellectually our youth, who are to become the citizens on whom depends, for good or for ill, the future of our republic, therefore,—

"*Resolved*, That we earnestly request our fellow-citizens of all political parties to bring forward as candidates for the School Committee only persons known to be of high moral character and of good education, with time and spirit for the public service. And

"*Whereas* we believe that the presence of women on our School Committee is both desirable and needful for the best good of our schools, therefore,—

"*Resolved*, That we ask the men of all political parties, in making up their tickets for the next election, to put upon them the names of two or three women as candidates for the School Committee.

"This meeting was the cradle of the Massachusetts School Suffrage Association, and the above resolutions seem to contain in a nutshell the future policy of the organization.

"Three days later a so-called Committee of Conference of the women voters of Boston met at No. 5 Park Street, and organized with Miss Abby W. May as chairman, and Mrs. Emily Talbot secretary. So vigorous was this little body in its early days that between this date of November 18 and December 8 no less than eight committee meetings were held, besides one general meeting of women voters, in preparation for the election of December 9. A woman's ticket was prepared, and three women nominated on it. A conference was held with the Nominating Com-

mittee of the Republican party, the other parties having refused the desired conference. That first year 894 women voted in Boston.

"At a meeting of women voters on December 6 it was voted to constitute the Conference Committee of twelve a permanent committee to take charge of school suffrage in both city and State, and to invite those women to join this committee who had signed the letter of the previous May, urging women to vote.

"At the last meeting of this Conference Committee, on December 30, Miss May gave an important report on the subject of 'School Suffrage for Women,' speaking in detail of the recent election in all its aspects, and claiming that the result, although at first sight a failure, was really a long step toward success in several ways. She mentions three: —

"'First, it proved that there are in Boston, and ready to serve on schools, women whose high character, whose intelligence, and whose faithfulness to duty are known to be so great that they are recognized as worthy to be honored with the high responsibility, and are sure to meet it well.

"'Second, it shows that the political parties of the city are willing to nominate women as members of the School Board.

"'Third, there was proof that the determination of the

women to vote for good candidates only had its effect on the nominations of the political parties. It is now possible to anticipate that the days of mere office-seeking are near an end, so far as the School Board is concerned.' . . .

"In accordance with a vote of women voters at a meeting of Jan. 13, 1880, a committee of five was appointed to draw up a constitution, which was adopted on January 27. Thus the Massachusetts School Suffrage Association was formally organized, and a board of officers chosen, with Miss May as president, Mrs. Cheney vice-president, Miss Rogers secretary, Mrs. Whitman treasurer, and seven directors. . . .

"At the second annual meeting, in January, 1881, a set of resolutions was adopted, whose aim was to increase the efficiency of the Association. Lecturers were again sent out during the year to arouse interest in the smaller towns of the State. Miss May's admirable little pamphlet, 'What can we do by our Votes for the Good of the Schools?' was published in June, and widely circulated."

The hearing at the State House was noteworthy. It was attended by leading men of the Commonwealth not heretofore identified with the suffrage movement, such as Rev. Andrew P. Peabody and Hon. William Gray. The new law was passed almost without opposition, to the surprise of its friends, and even of Miss May herself. She was

from the beginning the life of the Association, taking a leading part not only in its regular business, but in all the excited discussions which grew out of the different views of those interested in the work, on matters of temperance, legislation, and the opposition to the influence of Catholicism in the schools.

She always stood firmly for the entire independence of State and schools from ecclesiastical control of any kind, but for entire fairness toward all classes and sects whose interests were involved in the schools.

More than any one she bore the brunt of the opposition aroused against the Association on these questions; but she bore it bravely and hopefully, in dignified self-control.

On one occasion the directors seriously considered the advisability of giving up the Association, since its work seemed almost nullified by the whirl of excitement which swept around it. Every one present voted to abandon the work; but, when Miss May (who was in the chair) calmly and strongly expressed her view of the importance of the position of the Association and the work that lay yet before it, she convinced the whole board, who unanimously reconsidered their action, and determined to go on with renewed zeal and courage.

Soon after this time Miss May's health became seriously impaired; and in 1888 she felt obliged to send the following letter to the board. The Association, however,

refused to accept her resignation, preferring to keep her name at their head, even if she could no longer do their work; and she remained nominally president until the time of her death.

"3 Exeter Street, Boston, Jan. 2, 1888.

"*Dear Tina*,— Your notification for to-morrow's meeting suggests that at that time arrangements will be made for the annual meeting; and I write to say that it seems quite certain that I shall not be able to do anything for the Association this year, and consequently I want my name left off the list of officers. It may already be arranged for by others, to whom it must have seemed useless to have this particular bit of unserviceable timber taking a place on the board. But, if others wait for me to take the first step, here it is.

"Please see to it, when the time comes, that I am wholly left off.

"Always sincerely yours,

"A. W. May."

A teacher writes: —

"Miss May, at meetings of the Ward and City Committee, never wasted time, was prompt, and, though often in the early part of the discussion of a question in the minority, yet she kept to the point, and was apt to carry it.

"As a member of the School Committee, she seemed to think it her duty to assist the teacher to the pupil's point of view of a subject. She was a clear-headed, noble-hearted, broad-minded woman, a great loss to Boston."

As soon as it was known that Miss May had failed of re-election on the School Board, the State hastened to secure her services in a larger field; and in 1879 Governor Talbot appointed her a member of the Board of Education. No position could have been more congenial to her, and she frankly expressed her pleasure in accepting it.

She was especially interested in the work of supervising the Normal Schools; for here she felt that she was working at the very source of good influence. Whatever was done for these young teachers was to spread widely through the community. She always held the teachers' office as very sacred, and this feeling gave her great power in understanding them. The principal of one of the large grammar schools once said to me that he had "found more sympathy from her than from all the members of the School Committee that he had ever known."

The Normal School at Framingham was her special charge, and she is gratefully and lovingly remembered there. "I was of the last class to whom she gave diplomas," said one teacher, with pride.

The large building is appropriately named "May Hall"; and her portrait by her friend, Mrs. Whitman, which hangs

in the building, is a perpetual reminder of her interest in the school.

Neither did Miss May neglect the interests of advanced scholarship, as the following account of her work for the pupils of Boston University will show. She did full justice to the value of intellectual culture as broadening life and helping religious and moral development.

"In November, 1876, a group of women met to consider in what ways they could lend most effective aid to the general effort for the advancement of women, and after deliberation organized themselves into an association which pledged itself to increase the educational advantages offered to women, and to assist young women during their collegiate or post-collegiate courses of study. The permanent organization of the society was completed in April, 1877, when it received its charter from the State under the name of 'The Massachusetts Society for the University Education of Women.'

"Its membership has steadily increased until it now numbers over three hundred; and during all these years it has been fulfilling, in a quiet, unpretentious way, the purpose of its existence, aiding many students by counsel and sympathy as well as financial assistance.

"Miss May joined the society Jan. 18, 1880. Jan. 15, 1881, Miss May and Miss Crocker addressed the annual meeting, Miss May speaking on 'The Normal Schools of

the State,' and urging more extended supervision of schools throughout the Commonwealth.

"On Jan. 4, 1884, she was elected president of the society, and held this office until Oct. 23, 1886, when her resignation on account of ill health was reluctantly accepted.

"Her good judgment, her wise counsel, her devotion to every cause of truth and justice, can never be forgotten by those who were privileged to work on the Executive Board of the society under her guidance. The society is her grateful debtor, and the influence of her kindly presence still remains."

With all this work for her own State, Miss May did not forget her old clients, the colored people, who had lately become American citizens; and, both by generous gifts of money and by personal correspondence with teachers and pupils, she was a constant friend and helper to these schools, especially to those which introduced industrial teaching. She was one of the first donors to the Normal and Agricultural Institute at Hampton, Va. Miss Emily Austin was warmly helped by her in her valuable work at Knoxville, Tenn.; and, when Miss Austin was obliged to leave her work there and went to Hampton to establish a home for girls under General Armstrong's supervision, she appropriately named it "The Abby May Home."

She took also a deep interest in the University of At-

lanta, Georgia, and especially in the noble Normal and Industrial Institute founded by Mr. Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee, Ala. She counted both Mr. and Mrs. Washington among her personal friends, and a few extracts from her letters will show the constant and wise sympathy which she gave them in their work.

In 1859 her father and mother celebrated their golden wedding, an event of great interest to her. Her father died in 1870, and in the following autumn she took charge of the family remaining in the home. She bought a house in Exeter Street, and devoted herself to making a home for her mother in her old age. Her young niece was also with her.

Her mother's death in 1882 took from her life its deepest affectional interest; and, fully as she was prepared for its peaceful close, — for her mother had reached the same great age that her father did, — yet the color of her life was changed. As she says in a letter: —

"I did not even say 'Thank you' then, for I could not write. I could not do anything without such effort that I hardly tried at all. I sat down in mother's parlor in the place where she had sat so long, and just let the sun shine on me; and I did not care to do aught else. Few things have seemed worth doing since then as they did before. But your sympathy and your word of appreciation of her were very welcome."

She often says to a friend, "Knowing that to see you would be like a sea-breeze on a sultry day."

The remaining years were spent in work for the various causes in which she had always taken so much interest, her duties in connection with the Board of Education always taking the prominent place; but they were deeply shaded by a chronic state of invalidism, with frequent attacks of illness of greater severity. When she rallied from these, she spoke and acted with much of her old vigor.

She did not seem unusually feeble in the summer of 1888, which she spent at her old resting-place at Prout's Neck; but early in September she had a violent attack of illness. By her own earnest desire she was brought to the Massachusetts Homœopathic Hospital in Boston, where she remained until the end came, Nov. 30, 1888. The funeral services were held at the Church of the Disciples, and the worn-out frame was laid beside her father and mother at the beautiful cemetery of Forest Hills. According to her wishes, the funeral services at the Church of the Disciples were simple, but soothing and elevating. As the venerable form of her dear friend and relative flitted among the flowers, touching them with reverent hand, we felt almost as if she were an angel brightening the way for her through the dark valley. The Scripture readings by Mr. Eliot were strengthening and comforting; and her old friend, Mr. Frothingham, in his prayer lifted us into the

one thought of the sustaining power of God which can help us to bear the separations of life. We will not say, "Rest in peace," for it was not rest she longed for; but, "Go on to life more full, more glorious, more noble, even, than that given to thee here!"

"Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.

"Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valor, and adventures high."

SELECTIONS FROM NOTICES.

"Miss May was great, not by brilliancy of imagination or any one remarkable talent, but by the admirable balance of her mental powers, by her strong, powerful intellect, her clear judgment, her excellent wit, her accurate memory, her practical sagacity, her thoroughness in execution. To these intellectual traits must be added a moral soundness, a constant uprightness, a stern integrity, which gave all who knew her a perfect trust in her. 'I am as safe with her as with my God,' said one to whom she was

appointed guardian. These strong traits were the underlying basis of her character, and gave to her that impressive presence which always made its mark upon all who knew her. Her heart was as generous and warm as her brain was large and comprehensive.

"Her power of sympathy was one of her strongest and dearest traits. She had the rare power of entering into the hearts of others, and helping at just the point where help was needed. It was impossible that, with such strength of will and earnestness of soul, she should not at times be brusque in manner and appear imperious; but this was only superficial. She was always full of deference to the feelings of others, even of those from whom she differed. Added to these noble qualities was the warm religious sentiment which lighted and filled all her life with a flame of joy and beauty. Educated in the most liberal Christian faith, she knew little of the terrors of the law or the fear of God; but her heart was warm with his holy presence, and her hope was strong through faith in his ever-present help.

"Miss May was tall and stately in person; and, although not regularly handsome, her face had great beauty of expression, her mouth being especially expressive and beautiful. Perhaps the rare union of strength and tenderness, of earnestness and humor, in her character, was most fully expressed by the exquisite quality of her voice. It

was strong, deep, clear, giving you a full impression of trust in her sincerity, and also mellow and sweet. It did not become harsh when she was roused to excitement, but only deeper and stiller: it never broke into shrillness or sharpness. It was a power in itself, and helped to make her simplest words effective and well remembered."

One of her able coadjutors has prepared the following account of the formation of an association in which Miss May took a deep, active interest: —

"The National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches held in Saratoga, in 1878, more than usually brilliant and enthusiastic sessions, at which the women were most interested listeners; and, at a spontaneous and unpremeditated meeting of those present, it was agreed that an appeal should be made to all the women of the Unitarian churches to join in carrying out the work recommended by the Conference. The appeal was based on the unutilized power possessed by liberal women, which might do much to encourage and sustain the general work of the denomination, and the practical value of such sympathy and help.

"This appeal created a most earnest and universal desire that the women might take an active part in the work of the National Conference and do something toward stimulating denominational faith and spreading abroad a knowledge of distinctively liberal views.

"As a natural result of these aspirations, the women banded together under a few wise and able leaders; and, as the work was auxiliary to the National Conference, so the movement, when organized in 1880, became the Women's Auxiliary Conference.

"Miss May was among the earliest and most earnest of the promoters of the Auxiliary Conference, and was its first president, serving continuously for six years, resigning in September, 1886, on account of failing health.

"Those who were associated with Miss May during these six years will never forget the intense and absorbing interest manifested by her in the matters presented to the Conference, and it would be hard to convince them that any other cause was quite as dear to her heart. When she was elected president, and some one expressed surprise, saying: 'Why, Miss May, I didn't think you cared for such things. I knew you were interested in the freedmen and in suffrage, and, of course, in education; but I never thought of you in connection with religious matters,' Miss May replied in an impressive tone: 'Ah, is it so? Then it is quite time that I showed my colors!'

"No one could attend the board meetings, at which Miss May so regularly presided, without being impressed with her sweet and serious dignity and the important place given by her to the purely religious work of the Conference. Those who month after month climbed two flights

of stairs to the shabby room in Tremont Place always went away rested by the comforting words and cheered by the high ideals presented to their consideration. Always earnest and always keeping well to the subject in hand, there was manifest at the Conference meetings a depth of purpose and a sincerity of feeling which was often serious to solemnity.

"During the two years after Miss May retired from active participation in the affairs of the Conference her wise and judicious counsels were still sought and relied upon; and her interest, always instantly shown, was a constant encouragement and inspiration. Her address at the meeting at Saratoga, 1884, was published by the Alliance.

"The date of what, I think, was the last public effort of Miss May was April 4, 1888. She looked and appeared well, but expressed herself as 'out of such things.' She regretted very much that she had not a written paper; but, when she began to speak, no one else was sorry. She began by saying what the women of the denomination were trying to do, and then enlarged upon what the young men, especially the young men of the Channing Club, *might* do. No one present can have forgotten, I am sure, the fervent, earnest spirit of her address; and at its close there was not applause, but an expression of thanks by the president. I know Miss May made a strong impression upon the young men present.

"In April, 1890, the Conference placed on its walls in the new building on Beacon Street a most satisfactory portrait, painted by E. T. Billings. A photograph copy of this was also given to each Branch Auxiliary, to be hung in the different church parlors or vestry-rooms."

"Yours truly,

"Emily A. Fifield."

Her successor as president of the Alliance adds her testimony to the same effect: —

"Scarcely more than a decade has passed since the women of the Unitarian churches became keenly alive to the fact that among them, alone of all denominations, there was neither a missionary nor religious organization in which they were united. But no sooner was this realized than thought became action, and the Women's Auxiliary Conference was formed for missionary work and religious study; and Abby W. May was wisely chosen its president.

"She entered upon her duties with the noble purpose and zeal which characterized all her undertakings, and with a reverence and liberality that deepened and broadened as the work grew dearer and more dear to heart, until it stood second to none.

"She early recognized and deplored the seeming lack of

spiritual force that so closely united the women of other churches in similar work. The force was indeed with us, but latent, needing only an inspired and inspiring leader to bring it into action, and make it a power for spiritual good.

"In Miss May such a leader was found, who in the days of the greatest discouragements could see, with a prophetic eye, the blessed results that have followed. She was a deep thinker, an eloquent and wise speaker, a faithful worker. By her oftentimes impassioned utterances concerning divine truths, by her earnest appeals to the religious nature, by her tender entreaties and wise, loving counsels, Miss May kindled the hearts of her associates, and filled them with love and reverence for one who thought more of the spirit than the letter, who lived as she spoke, who contemned illiberality, approving all suggestions of broadening work and life, and welcoming one and all who wished to work with us. At the end of six years, when the sad day came in which the Conference was deprived of the guiding hand of its devoted leader, that hand had already made an impress upon the work which is felt to-day in the newly and more broadly organized body, and which can never be effaced.

"God bless her memory! May it ever remain green in our hearts!

"Judith W. Andrews."

PORTRAITS.

Miss May gave the portrait-painter a difficult task, for the expression of character was far beyond the physical beauty. The photographs do not fully reveal her mind. I think the best is one by Notman. A crayon head by Rowse gives the seriousness without the life and fun in her face. Mrs. Whitman painted two, one of which she presented to the New England Women's Club, and the other was given to the Normal School at Framingham by her and by Miss May's immediate family. The one at the club is the richer picture, but the one at the school has a fine expression of tenderness which suits her relation to teachers. Her friend, Miss Bartol, also made a crayon portrait of her; and there is a painting in the Unitarian Building by Mr. Billings.

She will live in the hearts of the generation who knew her; and, if her name be not written on the roll of Fame, her work will go on with the impulse which she gave to it.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

These few words from a note to a friend, to whom she was ever a good providence, are too characteristic to be

lost, as showing both her wise prudence in practical affairs and her constant regard to the uplifting of life by high influences and motives: —

"3 Exeter Street, Jan. 12, 1888.

"While speaking of it, let me say, if I were you, I think I would not put $1,000 into any one thing. There are good things to be got for $500. Thus you diminish your risk! Thank you for what you say about reading the prayers (Parker's). Let me add that, if you try them and do not find them helpful to you, positively not to read them because I sent them. Maybe they do not suit you: in that case, pass them on. Will you turn to the last blank page, and write this succession of numbers [about thirty-seven]? This gives the order by months. He was such a dear lover of nature (as well as of human nature) that it adds much to the beauty and power of the prayers to read them in their appropriate seasons. I try to read one each Sunday on the date nearest. No more to-day, but affectionate good wishes for the New Year and for always.

"Yours, A. W. M."

"I had the heart, but not the body, to go to Jamaica Plain and see you before you left. But for two weeks I was really ill, more so than I had been for long, and could

only do a part of the most necessary things. I had Dr. Wesselhoeft several times; and he set me on my feet, so that I went the last day of June to Watkins, N.Y. It was at the time of Cousin Samuel's death;* and I went to his funeral, an ever-memorable occasion. I do not believe it is often the case that so holy and beautiful an experience is allowed to mortals. It seemed the fitting close to such an earthly life as his."

"Prout's Neck.

"The one thing that most impressed me about your letter . . . was the sense of weariness which the letter brings, spite of all the life in it. . . . Of course there is but one conclusion possible for me; and that is, that you, like the most of the brave and able women of the day, are overworked, and need the rest that comes through getting through one phase, laying by its care, and making a pause before taking up the next thing to be done. How I wish you could take such a rest! Such a vacation as children have, who lay aside everything and just disport themselves in the sunshine! I wish I had a word of help or strength to send you out of this peaceful, resting life. I ought to be able to help somebody from it all. . . . I can and will try to keep your loving favor going round 'by doing something of the same sort for somebody, when I may have the chance.' Meantime, may

* Samuel J. May, who died at Syracuse, July 1, 1871.

not a letter from this good old place carry something of its flavor perforce, and rest you for a moment in its memories? . . . I am finishing this after such a delicious afternoon on the rocks! Everything is sweet and delicious after yesterday's rain. The tiger lilies flaunt their gay colors in all directions, the roses are finer than I ever saw them, their color is deep and rich, and the air,— well, you know what it is; and nothing but knowing for one's self tells the story of it. So good-night!"

"On Monday, if all's well, mother comes home. She is more feeble than in the spring, having had one very serious illness this summer; but she is bright, and will, I hope, enjoy a good deal this winter, as we shall, indeed, in having her safely back with us again. But it is needful that I should be much at home with her; and I like the thought of being able to stay without feeling that I am neglecting anything into which I had entered. I could never work on the School Committee as I did, in point of time and effort. Perhaps I might accomplish more. . . . I want to go to the Congress at Madison. I shall, if all's well, when the time comes. I have enjoyed the meetings in the past four years, and don't want to lose the run of them and the knowledge of those who go to them."

From a retreat at Florence, Mass., Sept. 5, 1864, she writes: —

"My life for the last two years has been a most fortunate and happy one in almost every respect. But I quarrel with it on one account, which is that I have hardly seen anything of my old friends. Very dear they were to me, and so helpful. Very dear they still are. But I have been cut off from their help, which, I know, they would generously have given if I had been ready to take it. But what can I do about it? Write one of them a bit of a letter to-day, just to make sure, if not too late already, that my claim is not outlawed. . . . The winter looks in prospect as if it would be pretty hard. Certainly, the war does not grow an old story to us or lose any of its exciting, wearing characteristics. I do not see how it can last much longer; but I have been sanguine all along, and sometimes I think I ought to take counsel of others' fears rather than my own hopes.

"But how good to hear again that word 'peace' uttered, as it must be from no hollow foundations, but founded deep in realities that can never, let us believe, be shaken down!

"Then, too, next winter I am to take the housekeeping cares. I have long thought perhaps I ought to do this; but it has not been quite clear that it would be best, and mother has not cared about it. But now it is clear. She is much broken, and everything is an anxiety to her. So I mean to close up some of my outside work, and be more

at and do more for home. I do not love household cares. I do not love to be shut up in the house. But, while I am fortunate enough to have one, I ought to be, and believe I am, willing to make some small sacrifice for it. With all this, don't you see how I shall be a real object of charity, and won't you put me on your 'list of charities,' and look after me a little?

"I am glad that it is not my special temptation to think of a future that is always an uncertainty. The feeblest of us all may outlive the strongest, and the only safety lies in remembering that, whatever comes, we are in the best of care. Thinking of this life and the next as one is the happiest way to look at both or at either."

"PROUT'S, August 25.

"I thought of you when the *Advertiser* brought the news of ———'s death, with a hope that you were there at the last moments. . . . I know every such experience is but one link in a great chain to you, and I think of you with loving and reverent sympathy. . . . How easy the way to go is made for those who, having long, rich lives closely bound to so many other lives, find themselves more than half in the great eternal existence even here!"

"I trust next winter will be somewhat less busy than

the last. I like to be well worked, but not much overworked, as then."

"A poem of Wasson's 'greater than any other of his' will be welcomed, indeed; and to work over and prepare them, as you are doing, is an enviable piece of work."

"I have been here a week, and am better for this air. . . . One day was ideal, and I felt quite like a (very diminutive) giant!"

"3 Exeter Street, Sept, 28, 1879.

"Your good words are very welcome, and I thank you heartily. I sympathize with you in being glad that another place of usefulness has been opened to women in old Massachusetts. That is the abstract view of it. Practically, I am much pleased to have the choice fall upon me. I feel reasonably sure that I shall enjoy the work. I wish I thought I were large enough to fill the place. You speak about the organization to help the new voting law to go into effect as inadequate. Is it too late now to do something by way of rousing the tax-paying to the duty of registering? I confess that, with a week of house-cleaning behind me and Congress in Madison and much other work ahead, I do not feel much like undertaking anything

more. But there ought to be a good many women ready to lend a hand, and I have all along looked forward to an effort in this direction for this autumn. Do think about what may be done in this way."

A few extracts from letters to Mr. Washington and Miss Davidson will show her long and steady interest in his work at Tuskegee: —

"3 Exeter Street, Boston, Jan. 9, 1882.

"*Dear Miss Davidson*, — I thank you for your pleasant letter, and for the invitation it brings.

"It is quite in the line of what I like to do, — this thing that you ask of me; but I fear I ought not to undertake it. Perhaps you will think I am right in this feeling, when I tell you that I am so busy that I could not give time to your school, and could not beg money. I suppose you would want both time and money of me, and you certainly would have a right to expect both from any one who undertook to be a trustee. Having said all this, I leave the matter in your hands.

"The two notices of the school in the *Workman* are very interesting. It looks as if an admirable beginning had been made, and I am quite willing to believe that the teachers who have undertaken the work will follow it up to

a thorough success. I congratulate you all on the beginning, and wish you a continuance of your zeal and courage, sure that they will win victory all the way along, in spite of many obstacles which will be sure to be found. I still make my pleasant visits at Framingham. It is a delightful duty and a great pleasure to go there.

"Miss Hyde, I am sorry to say, does not seem as much better in health as I hoped she would after her visit in England; but I believe she works too devotedly to be really well. She does not throw off her cares for a moment in the twenty-four hours. This, you know, is ruinous. I hope you are *playing* as well as working hard. The two go wonderfully well together.

"With thanks to you all for your invitation, and to you for your good letter,

"I am sincerely yours,

"Abby W. May."

"Jan. 18, 1884.

"*Dear Miss Davidson*,— Your letter makes me very sorry for you. I had hoped that you were getting on faster toward health than is the case. I trust that you are doing the right thing for yourself now, and that, when you really begin to feel like yourself again, you will have wise advisers to keep you back from all work until you are quite

fit for it; and, when you begin, I hope you will be so wise for *yourself* that you will begin gradually, and only increase the amount as you feel able to do so.

"You have many friends here who sympathize with you, and who would like to help in your efforts for patience and courage. You see we believe in you and in the Tuskegee work, and in your fitness to aid it. So you must try to believe that you are gaining some deep experiences now that will make your work larger and richer when you take it up again. Philosophy and religion are pretty hard to live up to in such trying circumstances; but they are the best help, after all."

"May 6, 1885.

"*My dear Mr. Washington*,— Your letter of May 2 is just now received; and I thank you for it, and for giving me the opportunity to make suggestions to be presented to my fellow-trustees at the coming meeting. I wish it were possible for me to be present and confer with you all in reference to the interests of the school. But it will not be possible; and neither is it practicable for me to aid you with any suggestions. If I could visit the school and learn in that way of its methods and their results, perhaps I could make useful suggestions. As it is, I am ignorant of all to be of service, and you must take the will for the deed. I hope the meeting will be fruitful for good. I am

sure your school, like all schools, must present many problems not easily solved, must have its places and times for doubt, and not seldom for discouragement. But, in the main, I rejoice with you that your story is of hopefulness and promise, as well as of very creditable successes. . . .

"I have also to thank you for a letter received in March, bringing the good word of marked improvement in real manhood and womanhood in the seniors. To be able to say such a thing is the best of success, and your great and abiding reward. I congratulate you and all your assistants that such is the result of your efforts."

"JAN. 9, 1886.

"*My dear Mr. Washington*,— I have been this evening reading the report of your school with much interest. How wonderfully it has been blessed with help and support from so many outside friends, and with faithful, devoted service from those immediately concerned in its management! Truly, all who believe in it have great cause to thank God for his loving-kindness in the past, and to trust that such efforts as are made for the school will be blessed to it in the future.

"I hope that all teachers and scholars are well, and that Miss Davidson is keeping her good resolutions of prudence in work.

"I send the amount promised to Miss Davidson by cheque enclosed.

"With my best wishes for a Happy New Year to each and all,

"I am sincerely yours,

"Abby W. May."

"Boston, May 24, 1886.

"*My dear Mr. Washington*,— Your letter is just now received, and I thank you for it. I presume there is not time for a reply to reach you before a meeting of the trustees, but I think I have no suggestions to make for the action of the board. I wish I could be at your closing exercises and at the meeting, as I am sure you know; but it is not possible. The same sickness that prevented me from seeing you when you were in town has lasted ever since, quite disabling me. Whenever there is anything you think I could do for the school, you must tell me. I am sure you know it will be a pleasure to me to help you whenever I can.

"Please give my sincere regard to Miss Davidson. I hope you will all have a good vacation, and gather a fund of strength for the important work of another year.

"I am most sincerely yours,

"A. W. May (*per* M. E. B.)."

On July 5 Miss May wrote in her own hand, saying: —

"I get well but very slowly, and am not able to use my head and eyes for much writing, so I must bring this to an end. Sending you my sincere regard, with my best wishes,

"Yours ever faithfully,

"Abby W. May."